

Betty McManus

From: "Tavernier" <ntavern@comcast.net>
To: "Nancy Tavernier" <ntavern@comcast.net>; "Kevin McManus" <KevinM@NEHE.com>; "Betty McManus" <ahabetty@attglobal.net>; "Dan Buckley" <DJB01720@hotmail.com>; "Bob Whittlesey" <rbwhittlesey@verizon.net>; "Ryan Bettez" <bettezfamly@yahoo.com>; "Pam Shuttle" <pam.shuttle@state.ma.us>
Sent: Thursday, August 12, 2004 3:05 PM
Subject: Fwd: RE: Acton application for Priority Development Fund

FYI. This is a response to DHCD in regard to the application for \$35,000 of Priority Development Funds. She is questioning why we need the PDF when we have CPA funds already voted. This may be grovelling but I am not too proud to do it.

Nancy

>Date: Thu, 12 Aug 2004 15:02:49 -0400
 >To: "Bobadilla, Miryam \ (OCD\)" <Miryam.Bobadilla@state.ma.us>
 >From: Tavernier <ntavern@comcast.net>
 >Subject: RE: Acton application for Priority Development Fund
 >
 >Hi Miryam,
 >
 >Yes, I am back and had a delightful 2 weeks in the Berkshires. I had
 >given Roland Bartl a call while I was away and heard that you had called
 >him about the CPA appropriation. I was hoping I would be able to present
 >our case and our thinking to you in regard to the CPA funds vs the
 >PDF. Thank you for giving me a chance to make a pitch, albeit a long response.
 >
 >First a little background on the CPA process. This year was the first
 >year for appropriating the CPA funds in Acton. We were all very green at
 >the process and it was a hurried effort. Proposals for the use of the
 >funds were due November 2003, were presented to the committee in January,
 >received committee recommendations in March and were voted by Town Meeting
 >April. ACHC requested \$75,000 for a housing fund and \$25,000 for a
 >feasibility study for the town owned land on Willow and Central. This
 >town owned parcel has been in limbo for a long time and we really wanted
 >to get it pushed to the forefront. We asked for a quote from one
 >consultant for the study work we thought was needed and plugged in his
 >\$25,000 number. The final CPA housing recommendations for ACHC were
 >\$25,000 for the study and \$25,000 for the housing fund, less than we had
 >requested. Town Meeting approved the requests.
 >
 >To dispense with the housing fund first, the FY2004 \$25,000 has been
 >earmarked by the ACHC for use in: 1. buying down the selling price of two
 >affordable units in a new 40B development by funding sewer betterments
 >worth \$15,000 total, and 2. to extend the EO 418 Housing consultant to
 >develop a comprehensive permit policy statement that will be endorsed by
 >the Selectmen and Planning Board and will become a blueprint for future
 >affordable housing development. We estimate that will be \$10,000. That

8/16/2004

>will deplete the Housing Fund for this fiscal year. Eventhough Town
 >Meeting voted to establish an endowed housing fund that would grow, the
 >Town Treasurer ruled that we could not do that so we have not been able to
 >establish a housing fund as we proposed. We expect to request more funds
 >in FY2005 for the same general purposes proposed this year.

>

>So that leaves \$25,000 to apply toward the Willow/Central St.
 >project. After the successful appropriation was made for this purpose in
 >April, we began to frame a RFP to get the feasibility study underway. In
 >early June, the notice of the Priority Development Fund was sent out to us
 >and it seemed like a program that was ready made for this project: it was
 >a "brown fields" site, in a village area, smart growth characteristics,
 >redeveloping an existing property, multifamily housing permitted, and the
 >density a perfect fit for the neighborhood. Needless to say, if the PDF
 >had come out first, we would have applied to that instead of the
 >CPA. When I attended the workshop you gave in Westboro, I mentioned to
 >you that we had voted CPA funds for this purpose but could very easily use
 >them to make the project more affordable in other ways and that I hoped
 >that would not harm our chances to get state funds. You encouraged me to
 >apply in any case. Our intention is to request more CPA funds in 2005 to
 >help offset the total development costs and to pay back the town for their
 >\$125,000 clean-up cost which was promised to the town meeting voters in
 >1998 when the original clean-up costs were voted. If awarded the PDF, we
 >would use the CPA \$25,000 as part of this reimbursement to the Town even
 >though it would have to be re-voted at a future town meeting. When we
 >began to take a closer look at the feasibility process from beginning to
 >end, we discovered that \$25,000 would not cover the full cost of the
 >planning that was needed which is why we requested \$35,000 in
 >PDF. Regardless of the source of funds, we will need to spend an
 >additional \$10,000 to have the detail we need for the RFP and to review
 >the bidding process.

>

>Now for the pitch:

>

>1. The Acton Community Housing Corporation has been in existence for 19
 >years, we have a dedicated core of members many of them professionals in
 >the field. For all of our years of effort, all we have to show for
 >moderate income housing is 19 units of home ownership units and an
 >additional 3 units of low income rentals in an assisted living
 >facility. Of those 19 units, only 7 were a result of Chp. 40B projects,
 >the rest were "begged" from developers who provided them both on site in
 >their subdivisions or in scattered sites around town. We had a good
 >working relationship with local developers but that was all before the
 >dramatic increase in property values in the mid-90's. There have been no
 >concessions granted to us since except under future 40B's. Fortunately,
 >Betty McManus and the Acton Housing Authority have an excellent record in
 >providing low income rental units and because we can count their 155
 >units, giving us a total of 177 40B units, Acton is at 2.32%. Pretty pathetic.

>

>2. Acton desperately needs more affordable housing, 760 units would bring
 >us to 10%, we are at 177. It's never going to happen, we all know

>that. Our school system is in the top 5 in the state, that's what is
 >attracting so many families to our town. ACHC would like to see 4
 >affordable families have the same access to this great educational
 >opportunity and we want to use this project to keep families here or
 >invite them into the community. What makes the Willow/Central project so
 >important is that we see it as an opportunity to build a 4 unit project
 >with all 4 units "affordable", ranging from 60% of the AMI to a below
 >market opportunity at 110-120% AMI. We DO NOT need any more market units
 >in this town, we have more than enough. Because this is public land being
 >used for a public purpose, our goal is to make it all as affordable as
 >financially feasible. To do that, we have to scoop up every available
 >subsidy there is for the development otherwise it would go to a private
 >developer who would most likely only provide one affordable unit. That is
 >what the PDF would mean to the project. If the full \$35,000 is granted
 >for the pre-development phase, that allows an additional subsidy of
 >\$25,000 (CPA) to be applied to the affordability of the project as
 >identified by the study.

>

>3. ACHC is considering being the developer of this project. We have the
 >talent on our committee to do the work and we are ready to have a hands-on
 >experience. An award of state money to this project would be a great
 >shot in the arm and would reward our efforts. It may seem like a small
 >amount of money but to us it sends a strong message of support. We are
 >frustrated that our years of work have not borne more fruit. We are
 >attempting to develop a vacant school into an 18 unit rental project with
 >a long term land lease but that project has been dead in the water for a
 >year due to an Attorney General "opinion" about public construction rules
 >applying to a private developer.

>

>4. We are a suburban community, we do not enjoy generous state funding
 >for anything. We cannot compete with cities especially when it comes to
 >housing funds. We have never used state funds for moderate income
 >housing. Our property taxes are the 15th highest in the state with the
 >average single family tax bill at \$6549. We cannot count on our taxpayers
 >to subsidize affordable housing. We are often considered "too wealthy"
 >for state funding but it is that lack of state funding that boosts our
 >local property taxes to fill in the gap. In the recently completed
 >Housing Plan, it was determined that the percentage of cost-burdened low
 >and moderate income households in Acton is much higher than in a majority
 >of the County's towns or the state as a whole. It highlights the need for
 >producing as much affordable housing as possible even in a project as
 >small as this one.

>

>So, Miryam, that is my pitch to you about the importance of granting Acton
 >the PDF funds in spite of the appropriation of CPA funds available to
 >us. There is much more at stake here than funding. What keeps us working
 >on affordable housing is the look of hope in the eyes of affordable
 >families. ACHC also has hope that we can develop our first public housing
 >effort in the town and that it will be something we will all be very proud
 >of and that the state helped make it a reality.

>

>Thank you for giving me the chance to better explain our thoughts on this
>proposal.

>
>Nancy Tavernier

>
>
>At 04:22 PM 8/9/2004, you wrote:

>>Hi Nancy: I hope you are back and had a nice vacation. s you know one
>>of the review criteria is demonstrated need for the assistance, in your
>>application under NEED you mention that the CPA recommended and Town
>>Meeting appropriated \$50,000 from CPA fund for future housing initiatives
>>However, reading Acton CPA program appropriations, it reads \$25,000 for
>>the J.214 Central and 28 Willow Streets Feasibility Study and another
>>\$25,000 for K Community Housing Fund your organization can use in diverse
>>ways. However you list all sources of for this project from PDF. I also
>>understand from your application that your organization will request
>>further funds from CPA in 2005. Could you please clarify all these
>>issues for us. thank you Miryam

>>
>>-----Original Message-----
>>From: Tavernier [mailto:ntavern@comcast.net]
>>Sent: Friday, July 16, 2004 9:53 AM
>>To: Bobadilla, Miryam (OCD)
>>Cc: rbartl@acton-ma.gov; djohnson@acton-ma.gov
>>Subject: Acton application for Priority Development Fund

>>
>>
>>Dear Miryam,
>>
>>Attached is an application from the Town of Acton requesting funds for
>>planning and predevelopment studies that would lead to the production of up
>>to 4 new housing units on town-owned land. I have also attached photos of
>>the site in its current condition. We would welcome a site visit from DHCD
>>and Mass Housing.

>>
>>Approval for the application has been given by the Acton Board of Selectmen
>>and a letter from the Chairman will be on its way today.

>>
>>Thank you for your consideration.

>>
>>Nancy Tavernier, Chair
>>Acton Community Housing Corporation
>>978-263-9611

Betty McManus

From: "Tavernier" <ntavern@comcast.net>
To: "Nancy Tavernier" <ntavern@comcast.net>; "Kevin McManus" <KevinM@NEHE.com>; "Betty McManus" <ahabetty@attglobal.net>; "Dan Buckley" <DJB01720@hotmail.com>; "Bob Whittlesey" <rbwhittlesey@verizon.net>; "Ryan Bettez" <bettezfamilly@yahoo.com>; "Pam Shuttle" <pam.shuttle@state.ma.us>; "Bernice Baran" <Bara437853@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 31, 2004 8:54 AM
Subject: Fwd: RE: Thank You!!!

FYI

>X-Originating-IP: [68.162.225.200]
 >Subject: RE: Thank You!!!
 >Date: Tue, 31 Aug 2004 08:17:53 -0400
 >X-MS-Has-Attach:
 >X-MS-TNEF-Correlator:
 >Thread-topic: Thank You!!!
 >Thread-index: AcSLsaRHWUajk3XaRoyQixiyB6/UMADotlbg
 >From: "Rita Farrell" <rfarrell@mhp.net>
 >To: "Tavernier" <ntavern@comcast.net>
 >
 >My pleasure - if we can't support groups like the ACHC then we should be
 >out of business!
 >
 >-----Original Message-----
 >From: Tavernier [mailto:ntavern@comcast.net]
 >Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2004 5:13 PM
 >To: Rita Farrell
 >Subject: Thank You!!!
 >
 >
 >Dear Rita,
 >
 >Miryam called me today with the good news about the approval of initial
 >study funds for Acton. We are just thrilled and I know we owe you a
 >great
 >debt of gratitude for your support of our proposal. Thank you so much
 >for
 >helping to make sense of the request with the Committee.
 >
 >Miryam has described the thinking of the Committee and the breakdown of
 >the
 >grant. We will go to work immediately on the engineering work to get a
 >good definition of the wastewater disposal capacity of the parcel of
 >land.
 >
 >Miryam also mentioned the potential CDBG funding option. This is very
 >new
 >to us but we are open to any suggestion for funding.
 >

8/31/2004

Betty McManus

From: "Tavernier" <ntavern@comcast.net>
To: "ryan bettez" <bettezfamilly@yahoo.com>
Cc: <rbarl@acton-ma.gov>; <achc@acton-ma.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 12, 2004 10:03 AM
Subject: Re: ACHC, Willow & Central Streets

This sounds fine to me also. All three firms have to receive the same information. I have asked Roland to answer and respond to the 3 firms if he agrees with this answer.

1. Stamski and McNary 978-263-8585
 80 Harris St., Acton
2. Foresite Engineering Associates 978-461-2350 Scott Hayes
 16 Gleasondale Rd., Suite 1-1, Stow
3. Goldsmith, Prest and Ringwall 978-772-1590
 39 Main St., Ayer

Nancy

At 09:55 AM 10/12/2004, ryan bettez wrote:

>Hello All,

>

>For what it is worth I think at this time an
 >approximate boundary would do at this time. I believe
 >the plot plan shows a boundary mark at this time.

>

>thanks

>ryan

>

>

>--- "Bucky N. Conner" <bconner@gpr-inc.com> wrote:

>

>> Roland,

>>

>> We are in the process of preparing a proposal for
 >> the Town's project and have a question. What level
 >> of "survey plan" do you seek? An approximate
 >> boundary? A definitive boundary? A definitive
 >> boundary with an 81X plan? Other? The answer to
 >> this question will have some impact on our proposal
 >> cost.

>>

>> Thank you.

>>

>> -Bucky

>> ++++++

10/12/2004

Betty McManus

From: "Tavernier" <ntavern@comcast.net>
To: <bos@acton-ma.gov>; <pb@acton-ma.gov>; <cpc@acton-ma.gov>; <hdc@acton-ma.gov>; "Pat Clifford" <forthill@prodigy.net>
Cc: <achc@acton-ma.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 29, 2004 9:21 PM
Subject: ACHC invitation to help design Willow/Central development

Dear Board members,

The Acton Community Housing Corporation would like to invite you to an information gathering meeting on December 14, 2004 at 7:30 PM at the Acton Housing Authority community room located at 68 Windsor Avenue. We are hoping at this time to talk with neighbors and residents of Acton about the town owned properties at 214 Central Street and 28 Willow Street. The ACHC has received a state grant to study the feasibility of developing these parcels for affordable housing and are using this meeting to talk with area residents about what they might like to see happen with the property. We are extending an invitation to a select group of town boards who may be ultimately involved in the approval process sometime in the future. We think the insight of these boards could be helpful to the process of creating a preliminary design for the development. We are particularly interested in collecting thoughts on appropriate architectural design options for the structures.

The parcels combined total 15,799 square feet and formerly housed a septic system installation and repair company. The sites were taken by the Town in 1996 for unpaid taxes. The Town of Acton has done significant environmental remediation work on the site, which is now cleaned and prepared for residential use.

The ACHC feels strongly that this is an ideal site for a small multi-family development. The lot is located in close proximity to the West Acton Village District and in-fill housing would be wholly consistent with the Town's emphasis on concentrating new development within the village cores. The parcels are zoned Village Residential which allows multifamily housing and the location would meet many Smart Growth objectives. This would avoid the need to use a Chapter 40B comprehensive permit. There are other multi-family properties nearby and a well designed multi-family development would blend in quite well. The current thought is to put a two family on the Central Street parcel and a two family on the Willow Street parcel. Other benefits to redeveloping the site are to put a piece of Town owned property back on the tax rolls, eliminate an eyesore, and address the current safety concerns that a boarded up building creates at the site.

Parking is available in the Housing Authority lot at 68 Windsor Drive. The Community Room is accessed through the main office door. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact ACHC.

Thank you.

Betty McManus

From: "Tavernier" <ntavern@comcast.net>
To: "ryan bettez" <bettezfamily@yahoo.com>; "Acton Housing Authority" <ahabetty@attglobal.net>
Sent: Friday, December 10, 2004 2:01 PM
Subject: Fwd: RE: The home design for Willow/Central RFP

>X-Originating-IP: [216.20.70.194]
 >Subject: RE: The home design for Willow/Central RFP
 >Date: Thu, 9 Dec 2004 16:47:03 -0500
 >X-MS-Has-Attach:
 >X-MS-TNEF-Correlator:
 >Thread-Topic: The home design for Willow/Central RFP
 >Thread-Index: AcTeNxm7R681KOkSAa5o2WFDLaItgAAX11Q
 >From: "Dean Charter" <dcharter@acton-ma.gov>
 >To: "Nancy Tavernier" <ntavern@comcast.net>

>
 >AMEN

>-----Original Message-----

>From: Nancy Tavernier
 >Sent: Thursday, December 09, 2004 4:36 PM
 >To: Dean Charter
 >Subject: RE: The home design for Willow/Central RFP

>
 >
 >Thanks. That's how I feel, why pussy foot around waiting for the lowest

>
 >bid like we did with the site design. We had a \$5000 budget and the

>bids

>came in at \$9000, \$8000 and \$4800.

>
 >At 04:33 PM 12/9/2004, you wrote:

>>Well, they don't let me practice law, but I would put the fee right out

>
 >>there.

>>

>>-----Original Message-----

>>From: Nancy Tavernier
 >>Sent: Thursday, December 09, 2004 4:27 PM
 >>To: Dean Charter
 >>Subject: RE: The home design for Willow/Central RFP

>>

>>

>>was that a yes? :-)

>>

>>At 04:20 PM 12/9/2004, you wrote:

>>> under the section for public advertisement soliciting designers,

>>>is a section speaking about what the public notice should contain.

>>>Chapter 7, Section 38D (b) (v) states "whether the fee has been set

>>>or will be negotiated, and if the fee has been set, the amount of the

>

>>>fee"

>>>

>>>-----Original Message-----

>>>From: Nancy Tavernier

>>>Sent: Thursday, December 09, 2004 4:13 PM

>>>To: Dean Charter

>>>Cc: Ryan & Erin Bettez

>>>Subject: RE: The home design for Willow/Central RFP

>>>

>>>

>>>Hi Dean,

>>>

>>>One question I have is this. Would it be possible to state up front

>>>in

>>

>>>the RFP's that the budget is \$5000 and ask them to tell us what work

>>>they would do for that amount of money? The RFP would list all the

>>>things we are looking for to do the task. Frankly, what we are

>>>looking for can be retrieved from the Internet on those housing

>>>design web sites. But we have

>>>\$5000 to spend and the Town won't get paid unless the work is done by

>>>someone. We are of course required to follow the procurement rules

>but

>>>could use someone from the DHCD consultant list and they would

>consider

>>>the

>>>procurement requirements fulfilled.

>>>

>>>Nancy

>>>

>>>At 03:20 PM 12/9/2004, you wrote:

>>>>The definition of "Designer" in Chapter 7 is: "Preparation of

>>>>master

>>>

>>>>plans, studies, surveys, soil tests, cost estimates or programs;

>>>>preparation of drawings, plans, or specifications including but not

>

>>>>limited to schematic drawings, preliminary plans and

>>>>specifications, working plans and specifications or other

>>>>administration of construction contracts; supervision or

>>>>administration of a construction

>>>

>>>>contract; construction management or scheduling". That said, if

>>>>the State is providing the money, they should know what to do.

>>>>

>>>>As for the next step, I think that two page note from DHCD I sent

>>>>to you yesterday should give some guidance.

>>>>

>>>>Regards,

>>>>
>>>>Dean
>>>>
>>>>-----Original Message-----
>>>>From: Nancy Tavernier
>>>>Sent: Thursday, December 09, 2004 12:44 PM
>>>>To: Dean Charter
>>>>Cc: Ryan & Erin Bettez; John Murray; Roland Bartl; Acton Community
>>>>Housing Corporation; Brent Reagor
>>>>Subject: RE: The home design for Willow/Central RFP
>>>>
>>>>
>>>>Hi Dean,
>>>>
>>>>This will be only a conceptual design phase, we have \$5000 to
>>>>spend.
>>
>>>>I
>>>>
>>>>don't know if that changes the compliance or not. These would not
>>>>be
>>
>>>>construction type designs. After this work is done, we have to
>>>>submit both the sewage disposal design and the conceptual
>>>>architectural design
>>>>
>>>>back to
>>>>DHCD for them to determine whether or not the project is feasible.
>>>>If they decide it is, they then allow us to hire a consultant to do
>
>>>>a feasibility study for \$15,000. This is all state money. After
>>>>that is done, the decision will be made about bidding the project
>>>>privately or with
>>ACHC
>>>>as
>>>>the developer or selling it outright with the affordable
>>>>stipulations clearly spelled out.
>>>>
>>>>We would be happy to have your input.
>>>>
>>>>Nancy
>>>>
>>>>At 11:52 AM 12/9/2004, Dean Charter wrote:
>>>>>Unless there is some exemption for affordable housing that I am
>>>>>not
>>
>>>>>aware of, hiring the architect will be subject to MGL Chap 7
>>>>>(designer selection). The actual construction would be subject
>>>>>to Chapter 149. This is provided that public funds are used. The
>
>>>>>RFQ as

>>>
>>>>>written is a good start, but it falls short of legal compliance.
>>>>>Depending upon how
>>>>>
>>>>>>Don wants to assign me, I could meet with the committee and talk,
>
>>>>>>or help with the documents and/or process, or send everything to
>>>>>>Counsel.
>>>>>>
>>>>>>Regards,
>>>>>>
>>>>>>Dean
>>>>>>
>>>>>>>-----Original Message-----
>>>>>>>>From: Ryan & Erin Bettez
>>>>>>>>Sent: Wednesday, December 08, 2004 10:36 PM
>>>>>>>>To: John Murray
>>>>>>>>Cc: Roland Bartl; Dean Charter; Acton Community Housing
>>>>>>>>Corporation; Brent Reagor
>>>>>>>>Subject: The home design for Willow/Central RFP
>>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>>>Hello John,
>>>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>>>>I am not sure how different this part of the process
>>>>>>>>>>>is going to be but I thought it would be good to start the ball
>>>>>>>>>>>rolling.
>>>>>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>>>>>>To date GPR with help from Roland and Brent have finished four
>>>>>>>>>>>>out of the five task that we hired them to do. GPR pointed out
>>>>>>>>>>>>correctly that the fifth and final task should really wait until
>>>>>>>>>>>>we have a better idea on the size and foot print of the homes.
>>>>>>>>>>>>The good news from GPR is that the parcels can fit a 12 bedroom
>>>>>>>>>>>>septic system and two duplex style homes.
>>>>>>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>>>>>>>On December 14th ACHC will be holding an information gathering
>>>>>>>>>>>>>>meeting on the parcels. Town boards and abutters within 300 feet
>
>>>>>>>>>>>>>have been invited.
>>>>>>>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>>>>>>>>Attached please find my first draft of the RFP or
>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>should it be called ????. Any help or direction on
>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>this is greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance for your help
>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>on
>>
>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>this.
>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>Ryan



Betty McManus

From: "Tavernier" <ntavern@comcast.net>
To: "Nancy Tavernier" <ntavern@comcast.net>; "Kevin McManus" <KevinM@NEHE.com>; "Betty McManus" <ahabetty@attglobal.net>; "Dan Buckley" <DJB01720@hotmail.com>; "Bob Whittlesey" <rbwhittlesey@verizon.net>; "Ryan Bettez" <bettezfamly@yahoo.com>; "Pam Shuttle" <pam.shuttle@state.ma.us>; "Bernice Baran" <Bara437853@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 15, 2004 2:14 PM
Attach: Willow-Central neighborhood meeting.doc
Subject: Report on neighborhood meeting

This was a remarkable meeting in that it began as a NIMBY (not in my backyard) and ended with support for 100% affordable units and a vocal critic saying to push aside the issue of the cost of new housing on services in the town and support it because it was the "right" thing to do. Of course Terra would also like to see us serve incomes at 50%AMI and below. Unfortunately, that is not the DHCD program.

We have been invited to the Planning Board on January 11 at 7:45PM in the Library to discuss our findings so far on Willow/Central. This report should be included as a testament to reasonable people finding consensus on a tough subject that impacts them directly.

ACHC members should feel free to add to these comments.

Thank you to all who came. Ryan did a great job. Ryan please add the names of the attendees to the attendance listing.

Nancy

Willow/Central neighborhood meeting – report
 12/14/04

Attending: ACHC: Nancy Tavernier, Ryan Bettez, Bernice and Steve Baran, Pam Shuttle, Betty McManus, Bob Whittlesey; AHA: Ken Sghia-Hughes, Dennis Sullivan, Jean Schoch, 5 abutters representing 3 properties, Terra Friedrichs, interested citizen.

Nancy introduced the work of ACHC and definition of Affordable Housing.

Ryan described the work that has been done on the project so far and displayed photos of sample designs. Engineering work has determined a maximum of 12 bedrooms could be accommodated with a subsurface septic system. The next phase is the preliminary design phase where an architect will be hired to do a conceptual design for the number of units and proposed unit configuration, and lay out on the site, based on input from the neighborhood and others.

There was much discussion about the project, the site, the process with solid input from the attendees.

This is a list of questions and concerns that were expressed:

1. Concern about septic odors affecting adjoining property since 12 bedrooms seems like a large generator of effluent
2. Wanted to know the full range of zoning options for the parcel, both commercial and residential.

Action item: check West Acton Village Zoning Table of Uses for the parcel.

3. Would like maximum green space in front of units so not asphalt from road to unit.
4. Neighbors want town to have control over development through special permit process especially in the design. Do not want to have a 40B or be sold to a developer for the "highest and best use" that would likely be inconsistent with the neighborhood scale.
5. 1200 square foot unit is preferable to larger and are more environmentally sound. It would reduce the footprint on the site.
6. Suggested partnering with the major utilities and EnergyStar programs to get the maximum benefit from energy efficient construction.
7. Set backs, side and front, should be consistent with the neighborhood.
8. Parking is a concern, do not want parcel paved over.
9. Smaller units with green space was a consensus
10. Want lower profile for buildings so it does not overwhelm the nearby properties. Do not want 3 story buildings.
11. No dumpster on property, individual trash disposal options should be considered.
12. Maximize the number of affordable units.
13. Consensus on design options 1 & 2. Victorian designs ruled out due to height of buildings.

The general consensus was to:

1. Include as many affordable units as possible, even 100% affordable units, with the understanding that subsidies would be needed to make the development economic. The combination of CPA funds and local and state affordable housing funds could possibly make this scenario feasible. The future feasibility study will make that determination.
2. Build smaller units in both square footage and number of bedrooms.
3. Build fewer units than 4, preferably 3 units.

The direction to ACHC is:

1. Consider 3 units, perhaps 1, 3-BR and 2, 2-BRs.
2. Put one structure on Willow and one on Central
3. Reduce the square footage to 1000-1200 sf.
4. Maximize green space
5. No more than 2 stories
6. Make all units affordable whether low or moderate income.
7. Consider rentals, home ownership or a combination of both.

Betty McManus

From: "Tavernier" <ntavern@comcast.net>
To: "Nancy Tavernier" <ntavern@comcast.net>; "Kevin McManus" <KevinM@NEHE.com>; "Betty McManus" <ahabetty@attglobal.net>; "Dan Buckley" <DJB01720@hotmail.com>; "Bob Whittlesey" <rbwhittlesey@verizon.net>; "Ryan Bettez" <bettezfamilly@yahoo.com>; "Pam Shuttle" <pam.shuttle@state.ma.us>; "Bernice Baran" <Bara437853@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 15, 2004 10:02 AM
Subject: Fwd: Aaffordable Housing, Willow Street

FYI! This is actually quite remarkable (except for having the wrong email address). She still seems to think there are town funds being used to develop affordable housing. Only CPA funds. For Terra, this is an amazing endorsement of our efforts. Good going Ryan.

Nancy

X-Originating-IP: [64.12.137.11]
 From: DoreHunter@aol.com
 Date: Wed, 15 Dec 2004 09:45:33 EST
 Subject: Fwd: Aaffordable Housing, Willow Street
 To: ntavern@comcast.net
 CC: terraf@compuserve.com
 X-Mailer: 9.0 for Windows sub 5115

Nancy,

I see that Terra sent this message to what I believe is an old email address for you, so I am forwarding it.

Regards,
 Dore' Hunter
 Selectman, Town of Acton, MA
 Tel: 978-263-0882
 Fax: 978-263-9230
 Email: DoreHunter@aol.com

Date: Wed, 15 Dec 2004 01:15:04 -0500
 From: terraf <terraf@compuserve.com>
 Subject: Aaffordable Housing, Willow Street
 Sender: terraf <terraf@compuserve.com>
 To: Dore <DoreHunter@aol.com>
 Cc: Nancy Tavernier <tavern@ma.ultranet.com>
 Message-ID: <200412150115_MC3-1-90D8-36C5@compuserve.com>
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I attended the informational meeting that ACHC had about their plans for the Nichols' Willow Street lot. I am in favor of much of what they are up to. The things I have problems with are the usual things. Here is what I have to say:

1. FOR affordable housing, AGAINST serving moderate income people as "charity". FOR serving town employees by giving them \$ so they can buy homes.

I am a supporter of the government's efforts to increase affordable housing. We have too little opportunities for people of low income to buy in Acton. But it is no secret I am against the ACHC's charter of focusing on serving people with incomes of \$44K and above. I think that public funds are better used to serve people that can not buy market rate. \$44K/year folks can buy market rate condos on Great Road, pretty easily. I did. My friends did. Using public monies to help people that can buy market rate seems inappropriate. The guidelines under which the ACHC's analysis that we *need* to serve people with \$44K/year people is based on metrics that were developed to ensure that people in Boston could buy. As such, I believe that this charter should be re-evaluated, to reflect the realities of Acton. If the ACHC's goal is to help teachers or other valued town people as a reward for their service, then let's position it as that. Let's not candy-coat it as an effort to help those who can not help themselves.

3. FOR having control over design.

I like the idea (if the land is going to be commercially developed anyway) of the ACHC developing land, preemptively, so that the design control remains in the hands of "us".

4. FOR the process so far.

The process of getting feedback tonight was good. I hope that more of this kind of thing happens with regard to design. Design impacts the value of abutting homes and the surrounding village, so getting input is important to all of us.

5. AGAINST selling the land to anyone.

During the "meeting" someone claimed that the town "needed" to sell the land to make up for the costs of cleanup. This seems like flawed logic in that the finance committee has stated that units need to be in the range of \$500,000 to break even. As a result, selling that small property wouldn't result in breakeven level market rate homes. No matter what would end up on the property, it wouldn't pay for itself. So the town would "make up" the costs of cleanup, only to end up with a negative long term return. The ACHC's position seemed to be that it would be fiscally wise to develop the property ourselves because development was inevitable. I disagreed with this. If a property is highly unlikely to end up a positive long term investment if developed, then keeping it undeveloped seems the least

fiscally painful. In other words, we eat the cost of the cleanup, because if we try to make back the money, we'll end up losing more. I don't have a problem contributing to affordable housing, I just want to know what the cost will be.

7. FOR financial analysis to determine the cost of our kindness.

I like the idea of affordable housing. But I suggest that an estimate should be prepared of what the long term impact of our kindness will be. I think that's only fair. To wave our arms and say that it might breakeven, seems unfair to the voters. I know that the Selectmen can decide on what to do with the property without a town vote. But it seems prudent to at least do that analysis so as to show voters that the appropriate thinking was done.

All this being said, I think that it's a wonderful idea to try and develop affordable housing in West Acton Center...IF it's done right. We'll see if we can do it right. Tonight was a good first step.

Terra

Terra Friedrichs
+1 978 266 2778

Betty McManus

From: "ryan bettez" <bettezfamily@yahoo.com>
To: <achc@acton-ma.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2005 8:08 PM
Subject: willow central

Acton Community Housing Corporation

Nancy Tavernier, Chairman

TOWN OF ACTON

P.O. Box 681

Acton, Massachusetts, 01720

Telephone (978) 263-4776

Fax (978) 266-1408

April 21, 2005

Dear Neighbor:

The Acton Community Housing Corporation invites you to a 28 Willow Street and 214 Central Street update meeting on May 9, 2005 at 7:00 pm at the Acton Housing Authority community room located at 68 Windsor Avenue. The Architect whom ACHC hired will be at this meeting.

The current thought is to put a two-family farmhouse style home on the Central Street side of the property. One unit would have two bedrooms and the other three. On the Willow Street side, we would like to build a three bedroom single family home in the bungalow style. The total bedroom count for the two parcels would be eight bedrooms.

At the meeting, we will have a site plan showing proposed building foot prints as well as architectural drawings of the proposed buildings.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Ryan Bettez at 617.828.4197 or bettezfamily@yahoo.com. We hope you will attend and encourage you to invite your neighbors and any other interested parties.

Thank you.

Ryan Bettez

5/25/2005

Betty McManus

From: "Christine Joyce" <cjoyce@acton-ma.gov>
To: "Acton Community Housing Corporation" <ACHC@acton-ma.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2005 9:36 AM
Subject: FW: Willow/Central Properties

FYI

-----Original Message-----

From: James Kingsbury [mailto:jamesbkingsbury@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, May 09, 2005 8:48 PM
To: Board of Selectmen
Subject: Willow/Central Properties

Hello All,

I am James Kingsbury of 30 Willow Street. My wife and I have recently attended several meetings where the ACHC has outlined it's proposal for the development of the land at 28 Willow Street and the corresponding lot on Central Street.

We would like to stress that we are in FULL support of their plan of development.

As direct abutters, this matter affects us significantly. The plan of the ACHC appears to us to be the most sensible use of this property. We think it is the most harmonious option that will not detract from the neighborhood.

Please consider our position when weighing your decision.

Sincerely, James & Abigail Kingsbury

Betty McManus

From: "Don Johnson" <djohnson@acton-ma.gov>
To: "Acton Community Housing Corporation" <ACHC@acton-ma.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, May 18, 2005 10:37 AM
Subject: FW: 28 Willow / 214 Central Property

Forwarded for your information.

Regards,
Don

-----Original Message-----

From: Philip Scarbro [mailto:p.scarbro@verizon.net]
Sent: Wednesday, May 18, 2005 6:17 AM
To: Board of Selectmen
Subject: 28 Willow / 214 Central Property

Dear Selectmen,

I am a Willow Street resident, living directly across the street from the 28 Willow Street / 214 Central Street property. I have attended two of the three meetings organized by the Acton Community Housing Corporation relating to this property. At the most recent meeting on May 9th, ACHC members Ryan Bettiz and Nancy Taverner presented the proposed architectural plans offered by Terry Heinlein, the architect hired by ACHC.

This email is to express my support for ACHC, the process they have adopted relating to this property, the architect they hired, and the architectural plans they have proposed. At the first meeting ACHC discussed their hopes for the property, but then stepped back and solicited input from neighbors of this property. A healthy discussion followed. Many of those suggestions were incorporated into ACHC's comments during Town Meeting and reflected in the architect's recent design. Ideas included the premises that affordable housing should be appropriately sized, consistent with the character of the neighborhood, and incorporate sustainable design principles. The proposed affordable two-family farmhouse-style home on Central Street and the proposed affordable single family bungalow-style home on Willow Street achieve all of this.

My understanding is ACHC will be scheduling a meeting with the Board of Selectmen later this spring, and that one of the significant steps will be the selling of the property, which is currently owned by the town. ACHC is prepared to purchase the land at fair market value and cover other related costs. The "risk" is that if the town is compelled to obtain the highest possible price for the property a private developer may try to squeeze in a much larger 40B development. While the town might realize a bit more short-term cash by doing this, this would not be in the best interests of West Acton, it would likely increase community opposition to other projects, and it would reflect poorly on our town's ability to facilitate appropriate development.

There seems to be fairly broad support for ACHC's architectural proposal - at least from the neighbors who attended the meetings I attended. These homes would help to demonstrate how affordable housing ought to be done. This development, and indeed the overall process, would be a model that other communities in Massachusetts would aspire to replicate.

I strongly encourage the Board of Selectmen to support ACHC's efforts to proceed with the proposed plan. Thank you.

Philip Scarbro
21 Willow Street
Acton

5/18/2005

Acton Community Housing Corporation

Nancy Tavernier, Chairman

TOWN OF ACTON

Acton Town Hall

472 Main Street

Acton, Massachusetts, 01720

Telephone (978) 263-9611

Fax (978) 264-9630

TO: Finance Committee
FROM: Nancy Tavernier, Chair
Ryan Bettez, Vice Chair
SUBJECT: Information Session on proposed affordable housing development on town-owned land at 28 Willow St. and 214 Central St.
DATE: July 6, 2005

We look forward to meeting with the Finance Committee on July 12 to present conceptual plans and answer questions about the ACHC's proposed affordable housing development. A Beacon press release, written by FinCom Chair David Stone says it all, so we simply repeat it here with thanks to David.

Nancy Tavernier and Ryan Bettez of the Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC) will present an update on a proposal for development of the Town-owned parcel at 28 Willow Street and 214 Central Street in West Acton. ACHC has completed Phase I of the preliminary design using \$10,000 of a State grant. This produced a site analysis and approved wastewater disposal plan, as well as preliminary architectural designs for three units of affordable housing. ACHC has been working closely with the neighborhood and hired an architect who designed a duplex farmhouse unit on the Central Street side and a bungalow on the Willow Street side of the lot. Both of the proposed units are consistent with the neighborhood character and architecture. ACHC feels that the neighbors are quite pleased with the progress to date on the process and the design.

The purpose of presenting to the Finance Committee is to prepare for the next round of necessary approvals by the Town. ACHC is ready to begin Phase 2 using the \$15,000 balance of the State grant funds. This will entail doing a feasibility analysis, applying to the DHCD for project approval, filing for a comprehensive permit with the Zoning Board of Appeals, and preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the development. The first step will be a meeting with the Board of Selectmen on July 18th where ACHC will seek site control of the parcel, contingent on putting the development out to bid after the permits have been obtained. Once a developer is selected, ACHC will apply for additional state funds to help insure the feasibility of the development. The ownership of the land will ultimately transfer to a developer after payment to the Town is made.

ACHC is reaching out to the Finance Committee in an effort to have the members better understand the process of developing affordable housing, especially when it occurs on Town-owned property. Because the site is a tax-taking parcel, the Selectmen have the legal authority to make decisions about its disposition. To date, no local tax funds have been spent on this project. However, there are plans to use CPA (Community Preservation Act) funds in the future.

Acton Community Housing Corporation

Nancy Tavernier, Chairman

Ryan Bettez, Vice Chairman

Acton Town Hall

472 Main Street

Acton, Massachusetts, 01720

Telephone (978) 263-9611 (Nancy)

(617) 828-4197 (Ryan)

28 WILLOW STREET/214 CENTRAL STREET, WEST ACTON VILLAGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Acton Community Housing Corporation – Who are we?

The Town Board responsible for developing affordable housing strategies and implementing affordable housing programs in the Town of Acton. This quasi-public body is a Selectmen-appointed board, created by a Legislative Home Rule petition in 1996. Prior to this, ACHC was a private non-profit housing partnership group formed by the Selectmen in 1986.

ACHC has five full members and three associate members. Most of the current members are professionally involved in affordable housing development. The Town's charge to ACHC is to "provide affordable housing opportunities for working families with incomes at less than 80% of the Area Median Income." Currently 80% AMI for a family of four is \$66,150.

2. Where is the Willow/Central St. town-owned property?

The subject property consists of two adjoining parcels of land in a residential neighborhood in West Acton. The parcels have frontage on two streets, at 28 Willow St. and 214 Central St. The current zoning is Village Residential (VR), which would allow by special permit from the Planning Board up to 4 attached multifamily units on 15,000 square feet or more of land. The 28 Willow Street parcel is 8,091 square feet and contains an approximate 2,000 square foot office and garage building. The 214 Central Street parcel is 7,708 square feet. The two parcels combined are 15,799 square feet.

3. How did the Town come to acquire these parcels and at what cost?

These two parcels of land were taken by the Town of Acton for unpaid back taxes in the mid-90's. It was most recently used as a septic system installation and repair company, until approximately 1995. The Town of Acton has spent approximately \$70,000 for significant environmental remediation work through the 21E process to clean up a petroleum contamination problem. The site has been cleaned up and approved by DEP and the Town for residential re-use. The clean-up cost was \$69,000.

4. What makes this an attractive site for redevelopment?

This is an ideal site for a small multi-family development. The lot is located within close walking distance to the West Acton Village Center. Infill housing would be consistent with the Town's Master Plan and the Planning Board's emphasis on concentrating development within and near the village cores. There are other high density properties nearby, a duplex abuts the parcel on one side and another is across the street. A thoughtfully designed multi-unit project would blend in quite well. From the ACHC's perspective, the proposed development would get a piece of town-owned property back on the tax rolls, eliminate an eyesore and a safety hazard, and create much needed affordable housing.

5. What is the proposed design for this site?

The ACHC proposes to build a duplex farmhouse style building on the Central Street side of the parcel and a single family bungalow style building on the Willow Street side. The duplex would contain a 3-BR unit and a 2-BR unit, the bungalow would be a 3-BR unit. All three units would be sold or rented to low-moderate income households. The wastewater disposal system has been designed to accommodate a maximum of 8 bedrooms. (See specific design materials included in information packet)

6. How will the construction costs be funded?

ACHC, with the assistance of Massachusetts Housing Partnership, has put together a Sources and Uses Plan that demonstrates the financial feasibility of the proposal. Proceeds from the sale of the units, CPA funds, gift funds, and grants will be part of the development revenue mix. (See Willow/Central spreadsheet in information packet)

7. What makes this proposal attractive to the State housing agencies?

The ACHC received a state grant of \$25,000 from DHCD and MassHousing as part of the Priority Development Fund program. The grant has been used to do preliminary site planning and architectural design. The proposed development has caught the eye of several agencies due to its location in a village area and its Smart Growth implications.

8. What makes this proposal Smart Growth?

The proposed development of multi-family housing on this site is consistent with the following Commonwealth principles of sustainable development (Smart Growth):

1. **Redevelop First.** This site was originally a residential unit that was converted to a garage and office use where cars and trucks were repaired. Its most recent use was by a septic disposal company using the building as an office and the parking area for septic disposal trucks. The proposed reuse of the property will enhance the neighborhood by cleaning up the long vacant site and eyesore while

providing housing consistent with the existing neighborhood without creating sprawl.

2. **Concentrate Development.** The West Acton Village area is a dense area with many large vintage homes, multi-family dwellings, and a diverse assortment of small retail and service businesses. This parcel is located in the Village area and within a one mile radius is a small public library, an Elderly Housing complex, two elementary schools, two churches, a playground, a cemetery, several restaurants, several personal service businesses, retail establishments, a pharmacy, a post office, and conservation areas with public access trails.

3. **Restore and enhance the environment.** This site was a 21E site that needed remedial abatement. The Town of Acton took the land for back taxes and later discovered the soil was contaminated by gasoline. The Town has now cleaned up the site at its own expense, and it has been approved by the DEP for residential redevelopment. The building on the site is boarded up and the land area is overgrown and unsightly. Housing development will be a welcome improvement on the site, enhance the neighborhood, and restore tax revenues to the Town.

4. **Expand Housing Opportunities.** The development of this site will provide needed units for low and moderate income families.

5. **Provide Transportation Choice.** The site is within walking distance to businesses in West Acton Village. It is approximately 1.3 miles from the South Acton Commuter rail station and there is a sidewalk to the station for almost the entire route. The site is also located within 2 miles of Rt. 2 and 5 miles from Rt. 495 for easy access to the highways.

9. Does the Acton Master Plan support the use of town land for affordable housing?

Yes, in 1990 and again in 1998, the Acton Master Plan supports these Strategies for Promoting Affordable Housing that would be met with this proposal:

1. Strategy H2: Seek opportunities to acquire buildable town-owned properties that might be suitable for donations towards the development of affordable housing
2. Strategy H4: Direct the focus of affordable housing initiatives to provide housing for the elderly, young families, and low and moderate income residents in our community.

10. What housing needs are identified in the new Community Development Plan entitled "To Live in Acton"?

Acton's specific housing needs were identified in 2004 through a needs assessment process and are listed in order of priority:

1. Affordable rental units for very-low and low-income families;

2. Affordable rental units designed for low-, moderate- and middle-income senior citizens and persons with disabilities;
3. Affordable homeownership units for moderate-income families;
4. Affordable homeownership units in a range of residential use types and sizes for moderate and middle-income seniors; and
5. Homeownership units at below-market prices, affordable to middle-income homebuyers.

11. Which needs will be met with this proposal?

Two of the units (2-BR duplex and 3-BR bungalow) will be sold to low-moderate income households with incomes no greater than 80% of the Area Median Income. The third unit (3-BR duplex) will be sold to the Acton Housing Authority for use as a rental unit for low income families.

12. How does ACHC propose to accomplish this proposed development and what are the steps in the process?

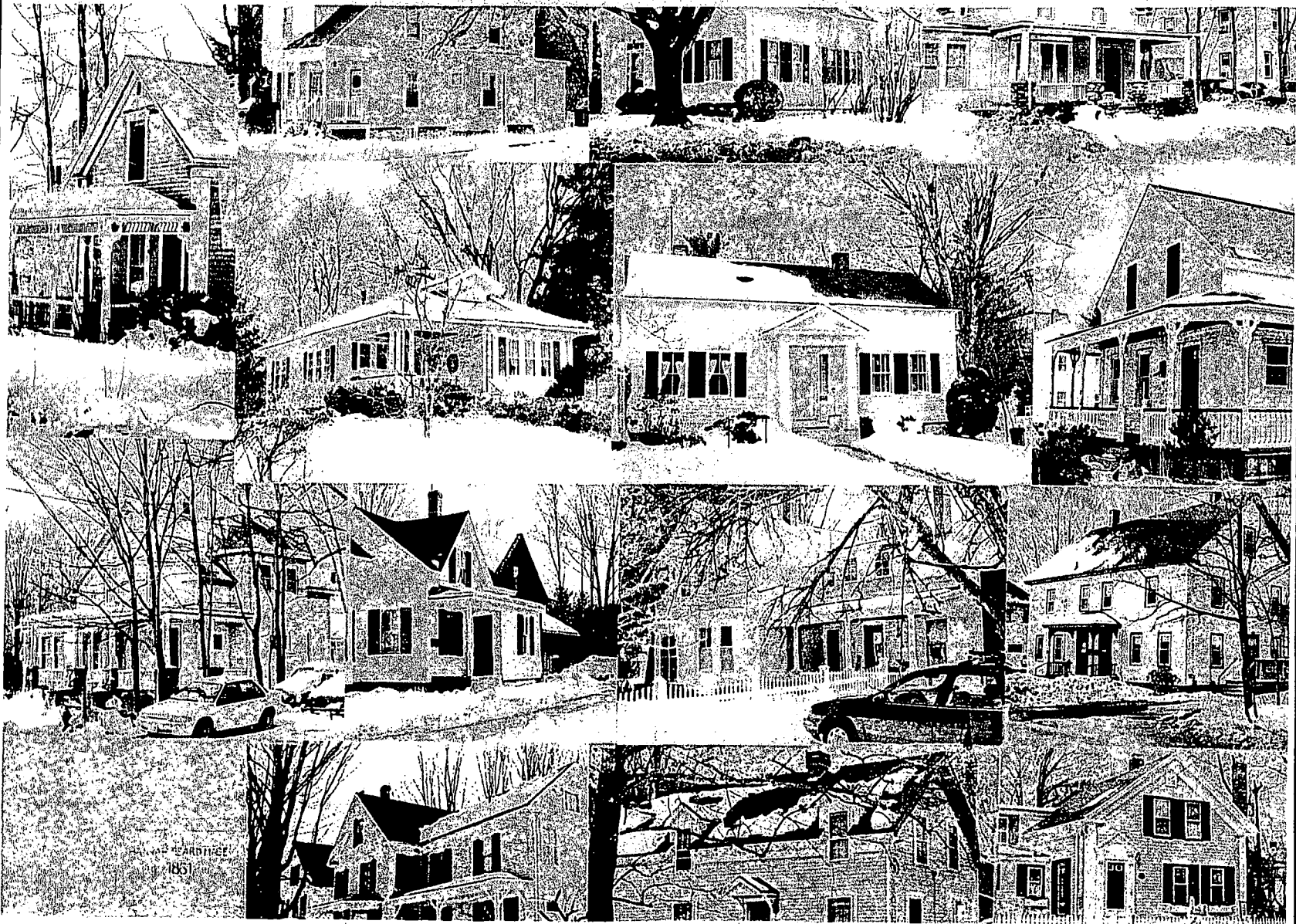
1. July 18 Meet with Board of Selectmen to seek vote that would give ACHC site control of the property, not ownership.
2. ACHC will apply to DHCD LIP program to get site eligibility from a subsidizing agency, which is necessary for the next step
3. ACHC will apply to ZBA for a Comprehensive Permit. A comp. permit is needed because the units are not attached, triggering the need for a zoning variance.
4. Once the Comprehensive Permit is approved, ACHC will prepare an RFP, with help of consultant. The project will be put out to bid using the required state bid regulations. Included in the RFP will be the Comp. Permit, DHCD LIP approval, Wastewater Disposal plan, and preliminary architectural design.
5. ACHC will select the developer who is most likely able to complete the development according to the conceptual design and whose proposal best meets the RFP.
6. Ownership will transfer to the developer who will then develop the property according to the comprehensive permit.

13. Who has authority to dispose of the land?

Town Meeting votes annually to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell and convey properties that the Town has obtained via tax foreclosure.

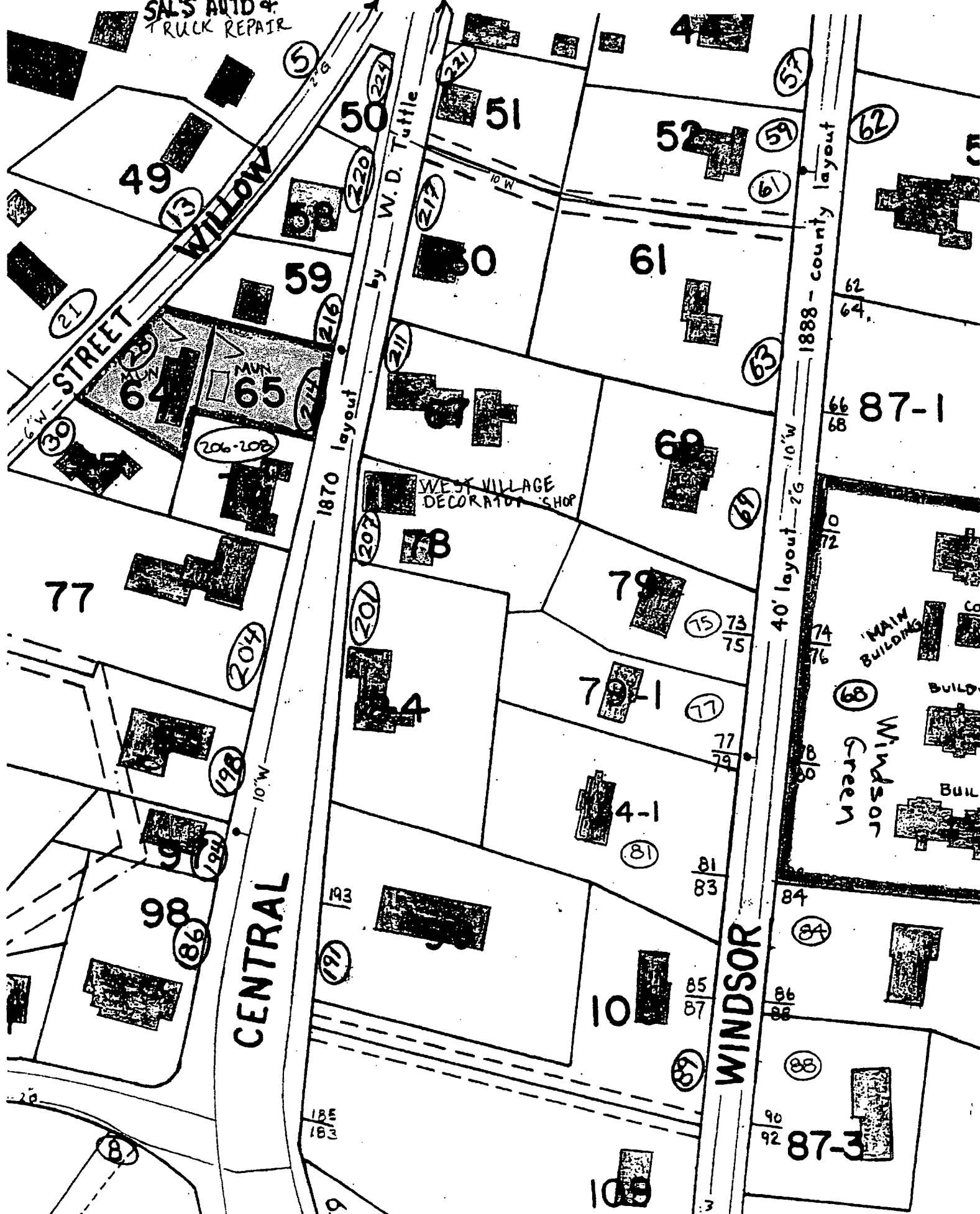
7/5/05

WEST ACTON VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD



SAL'S AUTO &
TRUCK REPAIR

10 West Acton Center

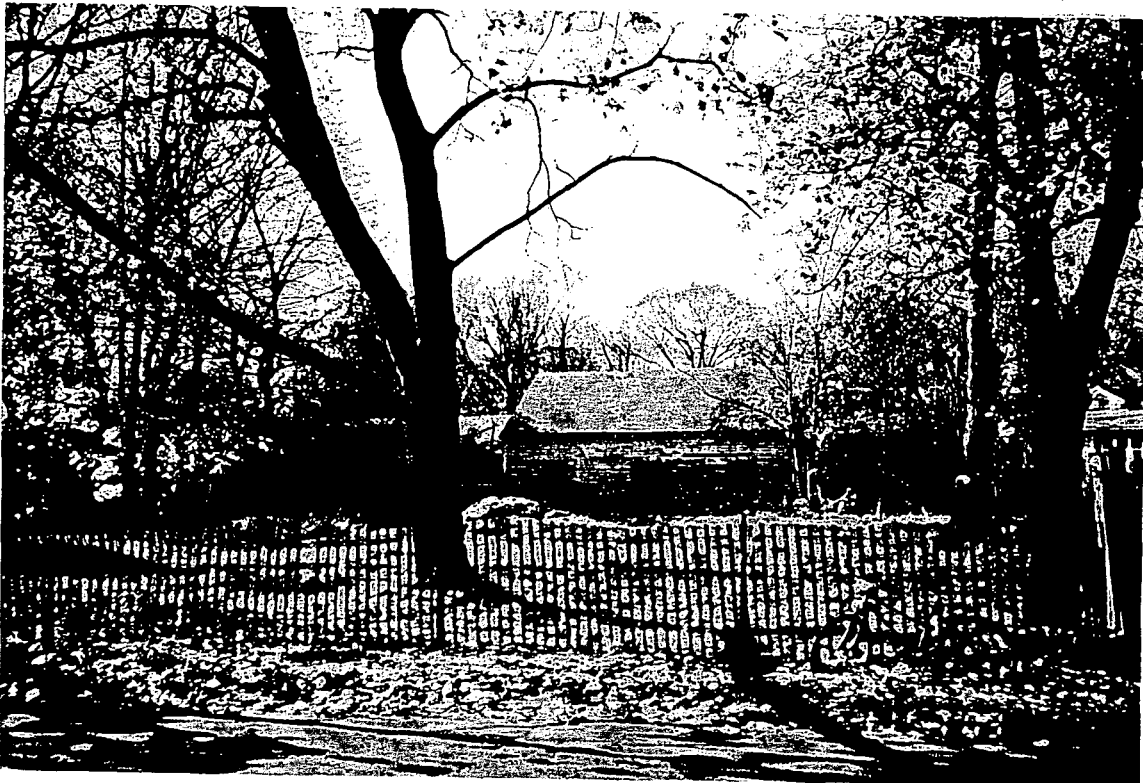


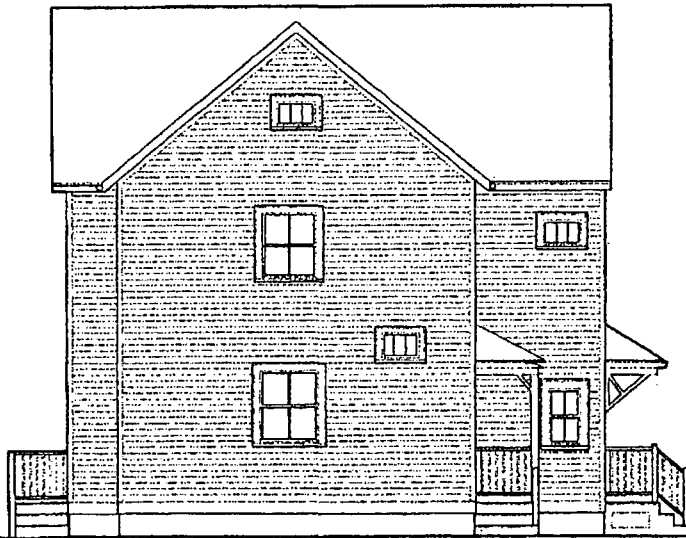
Pictures

Subject Property 28 Willow Street



Subject Property 214 Central Street





South Side Elevation Central 2 & 3 BDRM Units

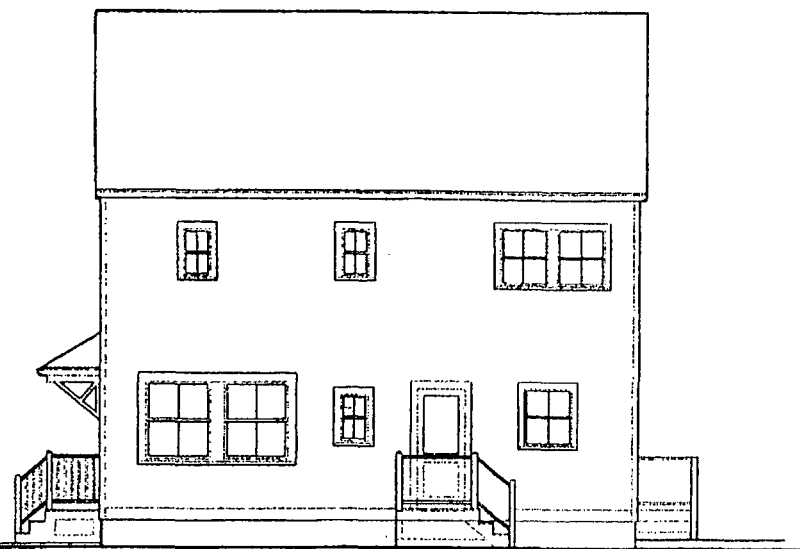


Central Elevation 2 & 3 bedroom Units

Central Street

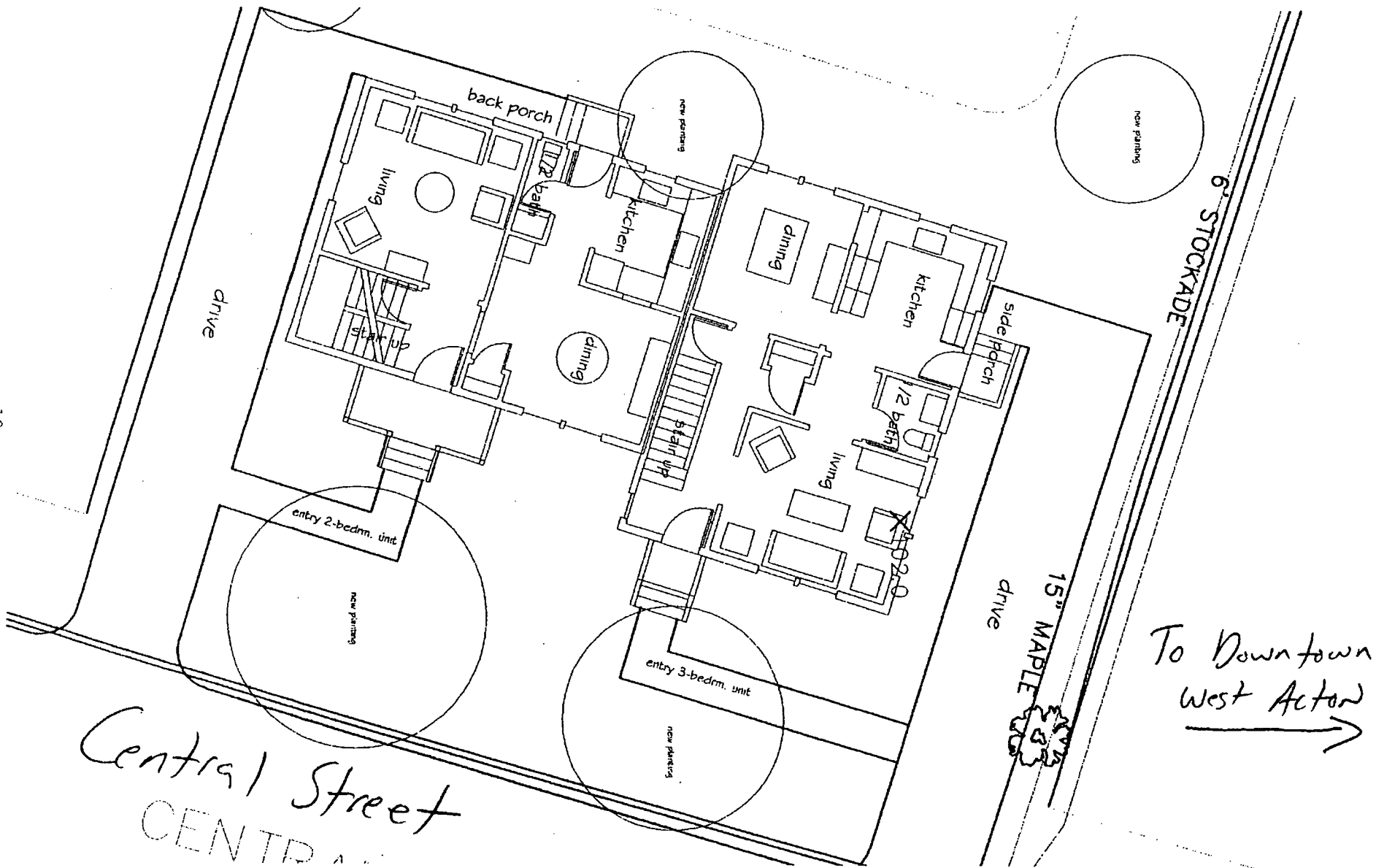


West Side Elevation Central 2 & 3 BDRM Units

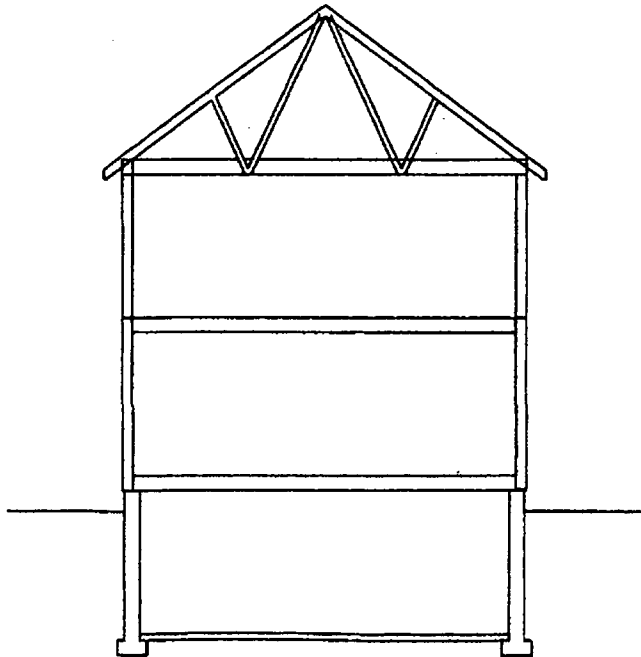


North Side Elevation Central 2 & 3 BDRM Units

Central Street

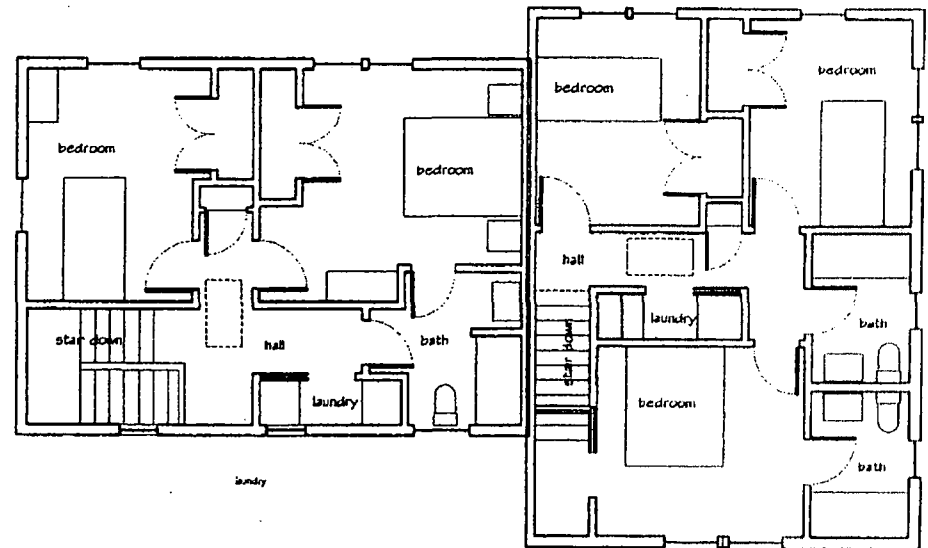


West Side Elevation Central 2 & 3 BDRM Units



Gable Section Central 2 & 3 Bedroom Units

North Side Elevation Central 2 & 3 BDRM Units

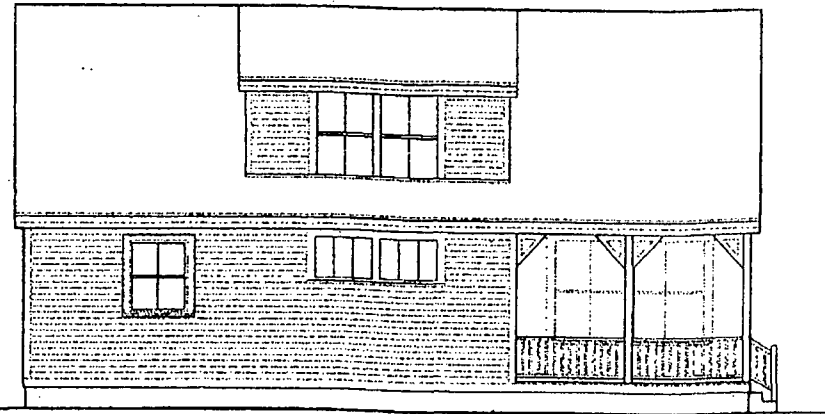


Second Floor Central 2 & 3 Bedroom Units Plan

Central Street

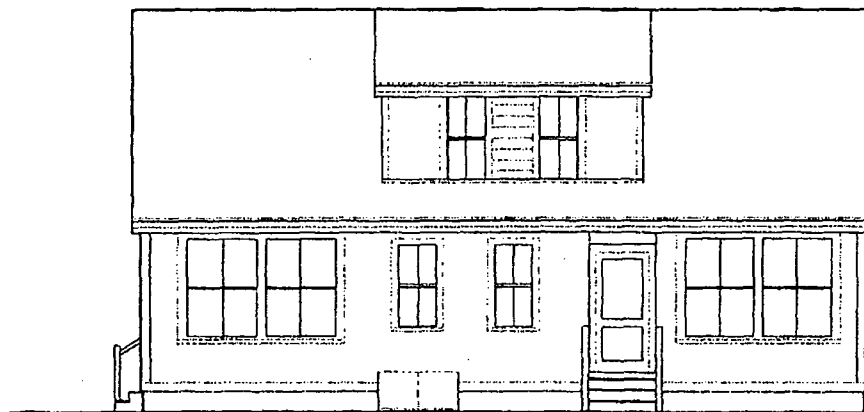


Street Elevation Willow Bungalow

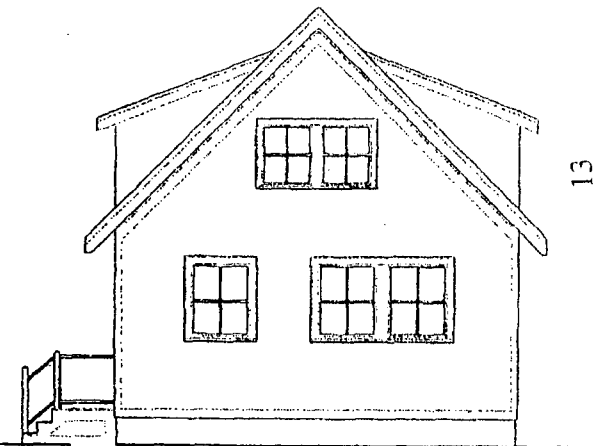


North Side Elevation Willow Bungalow

Willow Street

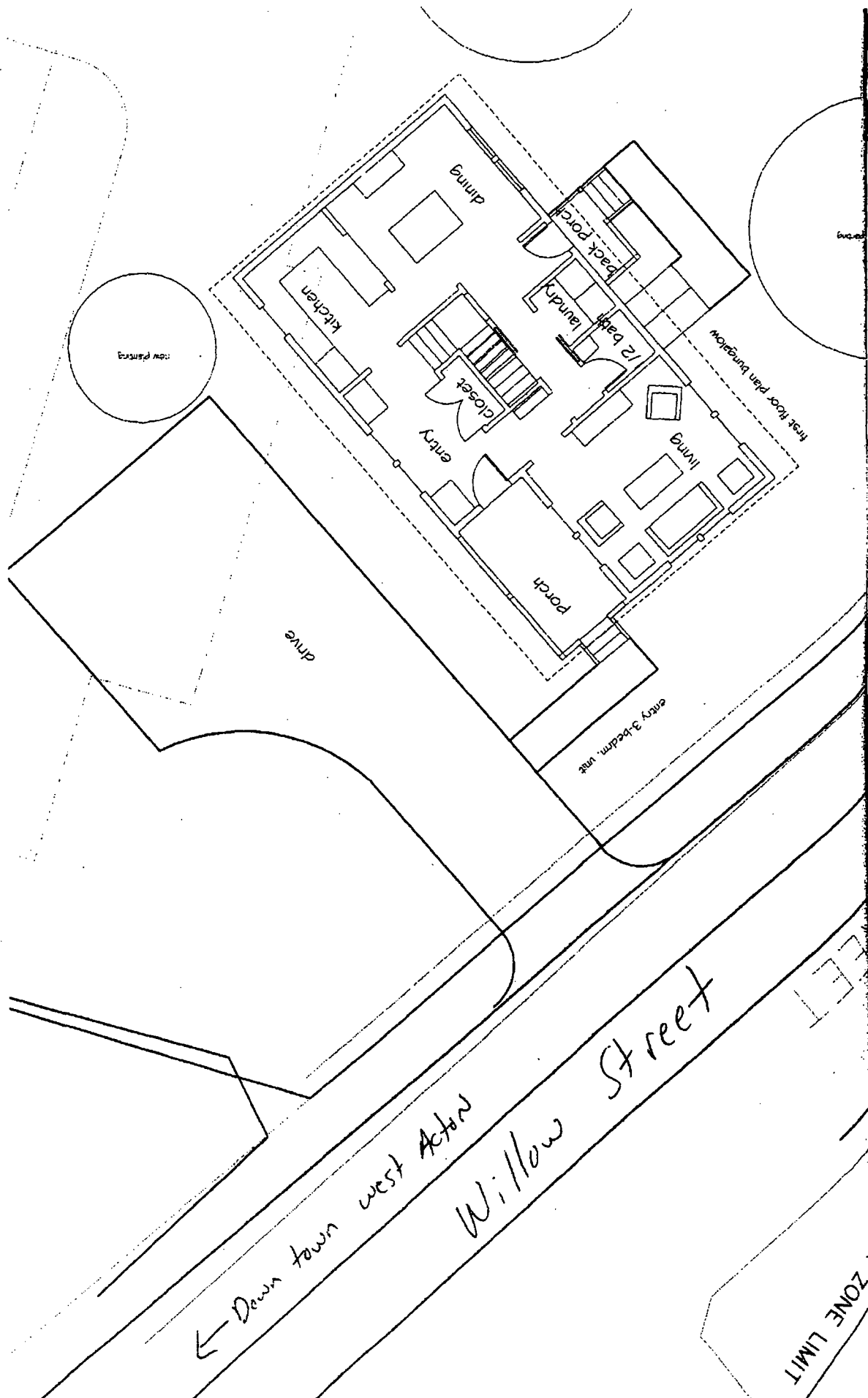


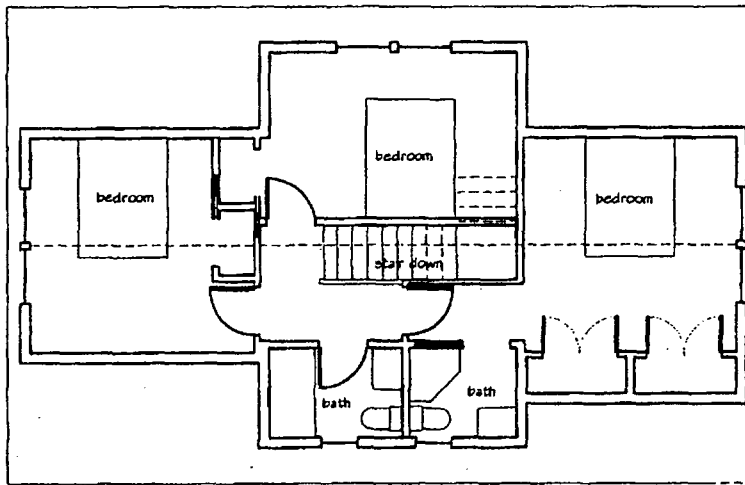
South Side Elevation Willow Bungalow



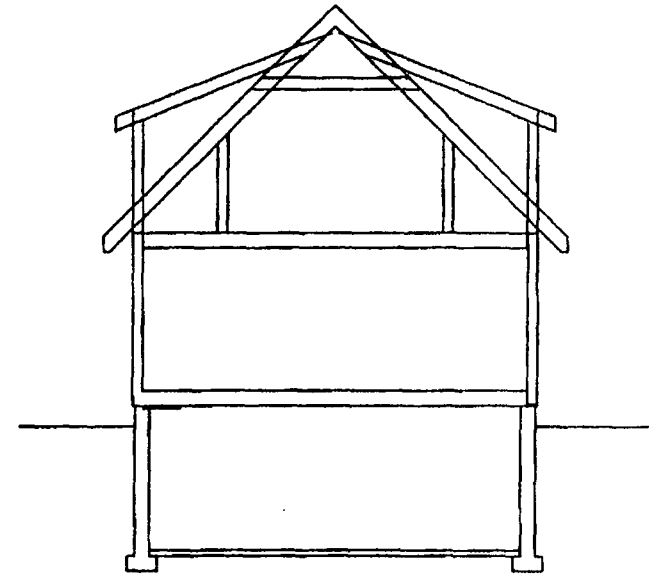
East Side Elevation Willow Bungalow

Willow Street





Second Floor Willow Bungalow Plan



North-South Section Bungalow

Willow Street

Willow / Central
 Acton Mass
 6/25/05

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|--|-------------|--|--|--|
| Development Revenue | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Number of Units | | 3 | | 3 | | | |
| Number of Bedrooms | | 8 | | 8 | | | |
| Number of Market Rate Units | | 0 | | 0 | | | |
| Number of Affordable Units | | 3 | | 3 | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Acton Housing Authority Purchase | | | | \$350,000 | | | |
| 3 bedroom Affordable Sale | | | | \$190,000 | | | |
| 2 bedroom Affordable Sale | | | | \$160,000 | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Revenue from Sales | | | | \$700,000 | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Total Development Cost | | | | \$1,198,275 | | | |
| Gap Financing / Funding Needed | | | | \$498,275 | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Partial Town Funds | | | | | | | |
| CPA Funds | | | | \$248,275 | | | |
| Non Town Funds | | | | | | | |
| AHA Condo \$350,000 | | | | | | | |
| State/ HUD Funds | | | | \$250,000 | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Total Development Revenue | | | | \$1,198,275 | | | |
| Total Development Cost | | | | \$1,198,275 | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Net of Revenue and Cost | | | | \$0 | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|------------------|-----|--|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Site Acquisition | | \$175,000 | | \$175,000 | | |
| clean up/back taxes/market value | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Site Work | | | | | | |
| Site Work | | \$50,000 | | \$50,000 | | |
| Demolition | | \$20,000 | | \$20,000 | | |
| Landscaping | | \$25,000 | | \$25,000 | | |
| Sidewalk betterment | | \$5,000 | | \$5,000 | | |
| Water hook up | | \$8,250 | | \$8,250 | | |
| Driveways and walkways | | \$15,000 | | \$15,000 | | |
| Septic System | | \$85,000 | | \$85,000 | | |
| Sub Total | | \$208,250 | | \$208,250 | | |
| Site Work Cost Contingency | 10% | \$20,825 | 10% | \$20,825 | 10% | |
| Total Site Work Costs | | \$229,075 | | \$229,075 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Residential Construction Costs | | \$500,000 | | | | |
| Concrete | | 4000sq ft * \$125 | | \$36,000 | | |
| Gutters | | | | \$3,500 | | |
| Carpentry | | | | \$65,000 | | |
| Roofing | | | | \$24,000 | | |
| Insulation | | | | \$15,000 | | |
| Doors and Windows | | | | \$35,000 | | |
| Interior Finishes | | | | \$30,000 | | |
| Cabinets and Appliances | | | | \$33,000 | | |
| Electrical | | | | \$18,000 | | |
| Siding and Trim | | | | \$55,000 | | |
| Painting | | | | \$28,000 | | |
| Plaster | | | | \$35,000 | | |
| Plumbing and HVAC | | | | \$55,500 | | |
| Temp Power and Toilets | | | | \$6,000 | | |
| Cleaning and Dumpsters | | | | \$8,000 | | |
| Flooring | | | | \$25,000 | | |
| Misc. | | | | \$28,000 | | |
| Sub Total | | \$500,000 | | \$500,000 | | |
| Construction Cost Contingency | 10% | \$50,000 | 10% | \$50,000 | 10% | |
| Total Construction Costs | | \$550,000 | | \$550,000 | | |
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|--|
| Site Soft Costs Estimate | | | | | | |
| Permits/Approvals | | \$4,000 | | \$4,000 | | |
| Architectural Plans | | \$25,000 | | \$25,000 | | |
| Engineering Survey | | \$5,000 | | \$5,000 | | |
| Legal | | \$15,000 | | \$15,000 | | |
| Insurance | | \$15,000 | | \$15,000 | | |
| Development Fee/Consultant | | \$65,000 | | \$65,000 | | |
| Construction Supervisor | | \$40,000 | | \$40,000 | | |
| Property Tax | | | | | | |
| Construction Interest | | | | | | |
| Accounting | | \$10,000 | | \$10,000 | | |
| Marketing/Lottery Costs | | \$8,000 | | \$8,000 | | |
| Overhead Profit | | | | | | |
| Consultants | | \$30,000 | | \$30,000 | | |
| Conditions Imposed by Town Boards | | \$5,000 | | \$5,000 | | |
| Sub Total | | \$222,000 | | \$222,000 | | |
| Soft Cost Contingency | 10% | \$22,200 | 10% | \$22,200 | 10% | |
| Total Soft Cost | | \$244,200 | | \$244,200 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Total Development Revenue | | \$1,198,275 | | \$1,198,275 | | |
| Total Development Cost | | \$1,198,275 | | \$1,198,275 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Net of Revenue and Cost | | \$0 | | \$0 | | |

Affordable Housing in Acton

Acton Community Housing Corporation

The Town Board charged with facilitating affordable housing is the Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC). This quasi-public body is a Selectmen appointed board, created by a Home Rule petition in 1996. Prior to this, ACHC was a private non-profit housing partnership group formed by the Selectmen in 1986. The Home Rule petition grants the ACHC broad powers not normally held by Town Boards. Original membership included individuals from the banking, real estate and development fields, lawyers, housing advocates, and interested citizens. Many of these same dedicated individuals became charter members of the 1996 Town board and remain members today.

ACHC has five full members and three associate members. Most of the current members are professionally involved in affordable housing development. The Town's charge to ACHC is to "provide affordable housing opportunities for working families with modest incomes."

The role of the ACHC is to act as the Town's initial contact with developers of proposed affordable residential housing projects, which may be site-specific or exploratory. The developer presents a proposed housing plan, indicating unit design and size, related facilities, site planning and affordability. The developer indicates any requests that will be made for a density bonus or other variances in return for the provision of affordable housing. Following ACHC review and discussion, specific requests may be made of the developer relative to the proposed housing, particularly as to the size, scale, adequacy, and appropriateness of the development, before the proposal is taken to the town staff and town boards. ACHC generally holds one or more public information sessions on each proposal.

Affordable Housing is defined in Massachusetts as *housing for households with incomes not exceeding 80% of the Area Median Income **AND** which restricts rents or home prices for a specific period of time*, generally 99 years in Acton. The price range of affordable homes is currently \$140,000-195,000. Deed riders restrict the future re-sales of these properties to other income eligible families. Housing is considered affordable if it does not consume more than 30% of gross household income. There may be some properties in Acton that are valued at these low prices but unless they are deed restricted for income eligible families, they can neither be counted toward the Town's 10% nor officially termed Affordable Housing.

The most effective tool for the creation of affordable units is the "Comprehensive Permit". This is the common term used to describe the process of permitting affordable development using MA General Laws Chapter 40B. This legislation was enacted in 1969 to encourage the development of housing for low and moderate-income individuals and families. Since 1970, more than 30,000 housing units across state have been developed under Chapter 40B. Under the statute, 40B establishes a comprehensive or "streamlined" permitting process enabling a local ZBA to approve a proposed housing development if at least 25% of the units are affordable to households whose gross annual household income

does not exceed 80% of area median income. The 2005 median household income for the Boston Metropolitan area that includes Acton is \$82,600. For a household of 4, 80% of the median household income is \$66,150.

Although a 40B project must adhere to the state Wetlands Protection Act, meet state building codes, and DEP Title V requirements, a comprehensive permit circumvents all other local zoning and approvals. A comprehensive permit may be used in a community where less than 10% of the housing units are affordable to households whose median income is 80% or less of area median. **Acton has 2.35% of its 7645 total housing units designated as affordable.** The MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is responsible for maintaining an inventory of affordable housing and certifying the number of affordable units in each city and town.

Under the comprehensive permit process, an eligible developer may request that the ZBA waive certain requirements under the community's zoning ordinance if the developer believes that the provisions make the development financially unfeasible. If the developer's application is denied, the ZBA's decision can be appealed to the state Housing Appeals Committee (HAC). The five-member HAC, which operates under DHCD, can override a local denial or conditional approval unless the project poses serious health and safety issues that cannot be mitigated. Historically, most cases that have been appealed to HAC have been decided or settled in favor of the developer especially in the communities under the mandated affordable housing count of 10%.

Acton Community Housing Corporation Members

Nancy Tavernier
Ryan Bettez
Betty McManus
Robert Whittlesey

Dan Buckley
Kevin McManus
Pam Shuttle
Bernice Baran

7/1/05

ACTON COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION

ACTON'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING MILESTONES

- 1990 Annual Town Meeting adopts Master Plan vision statements, including "Promote a wide range of economic diversity in housing including low and moderate income housing."
- Fall Special Town Meeting adopts the Affordable Housing Overlay District.
 Sub-district A includes most sizeable vacant or underdeveloped parcels around Town: 25% density bonus for +/-10% affordable units. Preserves single-family neighborhood character, but allows some duplexes.
 Sub-district B comprises less acreage. Includes, most vacant and underdeveloped parcels near designated commercial growth centers – villages and Kelley's Corner, and other parcels near established commercial areas. Allows up to 5 multi-family units per acre for +/-30% affordable units.
- 1993 (2)* Acorn Park PUD – 74 single-family units plus one commercial building. Planning Board negotiated two off-site affordable units using existing housing stock. Completed.
- 1994 (1)* New View PCRC - 24 units in single-, duplex-, and triplex buildings with one on-site affordable unit plus \$100,000 contribution to Town affordable housing fund, all under sub-district A zoning regulations. Completed.
- 1995 (6)* Bellows Farm PCRC, 1995 – 114 single-family units. Planning Board negotiated six off-site affordable units using existing housing stock. Completed.
- 1998 (4)* Westside Village **40B project** - Westside Drive off Sudbury Road. 16 single-family units, four affordable, on 5.25 acres. Completed. Base zoning was General Industrial, now Powder Mill. Affordable Housing Overlay Sub-District B applies. Within walking distance are Powder Mill Plaza (Stop&Shop, CVS, banks, restaurants) and other restaurants, and stores in Acton and Maynard.
- 1999 (4)* Harris Street Place Major Affordable Housing project (local sub-district B zoning with variance for 25% affordable units) - Jennifer Path & Samantha Way off Harris Street. 16 single-family units, four affordable, on 3.3 acres. Completed Base zoning is Residence 10/8. Affordable Housing Overlay Sub-District B applies. Adjacent to Great Road commercial area – convenience store, liquor store, clothing store, restaurant, etc.
- 1999 Annual Town Meeting confirms affordable housing goals in 1998 Master Plan Update.
- 2001 (1)* Dunham Lane OSD – 10 single-family homes plus one on-site affordable unit rehabbing existing home. Lottery held March 2005.
- 2002 (3)* Crossroads Condominium **40B project** - At 248 Main Street. 12 townhouse units, three affordable, on 2.23 acres. Completed in 2004. Base zoning is Residence 2. Affordable Housing Overlay Sub-District B applies to the northern half of the property. Abutting and within walking distance to Kelley's Corner commercial district – K-Mart, Roche Brothers supermarket, CVS, T.J.Maxx, restaurants, hardware, liquor store, medical offices, etc.

- 2002 (2)* Robbins Mill PCRC – 90 single-family homes. The Planning Board negotiated a \$400,000 donation to the affordable housing fund. Approved. Construction underway in 2005. Town will receive funds after 10th occupancy permit is issued.
- 2002 Colonial Acres IV PCRC – 23 single-family homes. The Planning Board negotiated a \$300,000 contribution for affordable housing to the Acton Housing Authority. Approved. Construction underway.
- 2003 (3)* Inn at Robbins Brook – Selectmen negotiated 3 rental units at the Assisted Living facility for low income seniors. Local preference is given to 2 of the 3 units.
- 2003 Affordable Housing Plan with State funds. State approved the project . \$30K from the Executive Order 418 funding of Community Development Plans. By State requirements, the project completed 6/30/04.
- 2003-2004 (3)*
Franklin Place Ch. **40B project** located at 520 Main St. just outside Acton Center. Originally proposed at 32 units. Denied by ZBA Nov. 2003. Negotiated a smaller project of 12 units. Approval by ZBA. Occupancy estimated September 2005.
- Upcoming:
- 2004 Towne School building conversion to 18 affordable rental units. Time line estimated. Abutting and within walking distance of Kelley's Corner commercial district. Delayed due to procurement process question at state level. Expected to proceed in 2005.
- 2004-5 (2)* Fort Pond Brook Place Ch. **40B project** located at 68 River St. 8 units in 4, 2 unit townhouses with 2 affordable units. ZBA approved Dec. 21, 2004. Occupancy estimated for October 2005.
- 2004-5 (96)* The Woodlands at Laurel Hill Ch. **40B rental project** located at 80-82 Nagog Park. Proposed to be 296 rental units, 1 and 2 bedrooms, located in Acton. An additional 84 2-BR condo units that may be converted to 55+ housing. ZBA hearing began 11/4/04, still in hearing phase.
- 2005 (3)* Blanchard Place Ch. **40B project** for 139 Prospect St. Proposed to be 12 units of 2 and 3 BR condo units, with 3 affordable units. Project will be submitted to DHCD by August 2005.

* Number of affordable units in project

7/1/05

Acton Community Housing Corporation

Nancy Tavernier, Chairman

TOWN OF ACTON

Acton Town Hall

472 Main Street

Acton, Massachusetts, 01720

Telephone (978) 263-9611

Fax (978) 264-9630

TO: Finance Committee
FROM: Nancy Tavernier, Chair
Ryan Bettez, Vice Chair
SUBJECT: Information Session on proposed affordable housing development on town-owned land at 28 Willow St. and 214 Central St.
DATE: July 6, 2005

We look forward to meeting with the Finance Committee on July 12 to present conceptual plans and answer questions about the ACHC's proposed affordable housing development. A Beacon press release, written by FinCom Chair David Stone says it all, so we simply repeat it here with thanks to David.

Nancy Tavernier and Ryan Bettez of the Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC) will present an update on a proposal for development of the Town-owned parcel at 28 Willow Street and 214 Central Street in West Acton. ACHC has completed Phase I of the preliminary design using \$10,000 of a State grant. This produced a site analysis and approved wastewater disposal plan, as well as preliminary architectural designs for three units of affordable housing. ACHC has been working closely with the neighborhood and hired an architect who designed a duplex farmhouse unit on the Central Street side and a bungalow on the Willow Street side of the lot. Both of the proposed units are consistent with the neighborhood character and architecture. ACHC feels that the neighbors are quite pleased with the progress to date on the process and the design.

The purpose of presenting to the Finance Committee is to prepare for the next round of necessary approvals by the Town. ACHC is ready to begin Phase 2 using the \$15,000 balance of the State grant funds. This will entail doing a feasibility analysis, applying to the DHCD for project approval, filing for a comprehensive permit with the Zoning Board of Appeals, and preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the development. The first step will be a meeting with the Board of Selectmen on July 18th where ACHC will seek site control of the parcel, contingent on putting the development out to bid after the permits have been obtained. Once a developer is selected, ACHC will apply for additional state funds to help insure the feasibility of the development. The ownership of the land will ultimately transfer to a developer after payment to the Town is made.

ACHC is reaching out to the Finance Committee in an effort to have the members better understand the process of developing affordable housing, especially when it occurs on Town-owned property. Because the site is a tax-taking parcel, the Selectmen have the legal authority to make decisions about its disposition. To date, no local tax funds have been spent on this project. However, there are plans to use CPA (Community Preservation Act) funds in the future.

Acton Community Housing Corporation

Nancy Tavernier, Chairman

Ryan Bettez, Vice Chairman

Acton Town Hall

472 Main Street

Acton, Massachusetts, 01720

Telephone (978) 263-9611 (Nancy)

(617) 828-4197 (Ryan)

28 WILLOW STREET/214 CENTRAL STREET, WEST ACTON VILLAGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Acton Community Housing Corporation – Who are we?

The Town Board responsible for developing affordable housing strategies and implementing affordable housing programs in the Town of Acton. This quasi-public body is a Selectmen-appointed board, created by a Legislative Home Rule petition in 1996. Prior to this, ACHC was a private non-profit housing partnership group formed by the Selectmen in 1986.

ACHC has five full members and three associate members. Most of the current members are professionally involved in affordable housing development. The Town's charge to ACHC is to "provide affordable housing opportunities for working families with incomes at less than 80% of the Area Median Income." Currently 80% AMI for a family of four is \$66,150.

2. Where is the Willow/Central St. town-owned property?

The subject property consists of two adjoining parcels of land in a residential neighborhood in West Acton. The parcels have frontage on two streets, at 28 Willow St. and 214 Central St. The current zoning is Village Residential (VR), which would allow by special permit from the Planning Board up to 4 attached multifamily units on 15,000 square feet or more of land. The 28 Willow Street parcel is 8,091 square feet and contains an approximate 2,000 square foot office and garage building. The 214 Central Street parcel is 7,708 square feet. The two parcels combined are 15,799 square feet.

3. How did the Town come to acquire these parcels and at what cost?

These two parcels of land were taken by the Town of Acton for unpaid back taxes in the mid-90's. It was most recently used as a septic system installation and repair company, until approximately 1995. The Town of Acton has spent approximately \$70,000 for significant environmental remediation work through the 21E process to clean up a petroleum contamination problem. The site has been cleaned up and approved by DEP and the Town for residential re-use. The clean-up cost was \$69,000.

4. What makes this an attractive site for redevelopment?

This is an ideal site for a small multi-family development. The lot is located within close walking distance to the West Acton Village Center. Infill housing would be consistent with the Town's Master Plan and the Planning Board's emphasis on concentrating development within and near the village cores. There are other high density properties nearby, a duplex abuts the parcel on one side and another is across the street. A thoughtfully designed multi-unit project would blend in quite well. From the ACHC's perspective, the proposed development would get a piece of town-owned property back on the tax rolls, eliminate an eyesore and a safety hazard, and create much needed affordable housing.

5. What is the proposed design for this site?

The ACHC proposes to build a duplex farmhouse style building on the Central Street side of the parcel and a single family bungalow style building on the Willow Street side. The duplex would contain a 3-BR unit and a 2-BR unit, the bungalow would be a 3-BR unit. All three units would be sold or rented to low-moderate income households. The wastewater disposal system has been designed to accommodate a maximum of 8 bedrooms. (See specific design materials included in information packet)

6. How will the construction costs be funded?

ACHC, with the assistance of Massachusetts Housing Partnership, has put together a Sources and Uses Plan that demonstrates the financial feasibility of the proposal. Proceeds from the sale of the units, CPA funds, gift funds, and grants will be part of the development revenue mix. (See Willow/Central spreadsheet in information packet)

7. What makes this proposal attractive to the State housing agencies?

The ACHC received a state grant of \$25,000 from DHCD and MassHousing as part of the Priority Development Fund program. The grant has been used to do preliminary site planning and architectural design. The proposed development has caught the eye of several agencies due to its location in a village area and its Smart Growth implications.

8. What makes this proposal Smart Growth?

The proposed development of multi-family housing on this site is consistent with the following Commonwealth principles of sustainable development (Smart Growth):

1. **Redevelop First.** This site was originally a residential unit that was converted to a garage and office use where cars and trucks were repaired. Its most recent use was by a septic disposal company using the building as an office and the parking area for septic disposal trucks. The proposed reuse of the property will enhance the neighborhood by cleaning up the long vacant site and eyesore while

providing housing consistent with the existing neighborhood without creating sprawl.

2. **Concentrate Development**. The West Acton Village area is a dense area with many large vintage homes, multi-family dwellings, and a diverse assortment of small retail and service businesses. This parcel is located in the Village area and within a one mile radius is a small public library, an Elderly Housing complex, two elementary schools, two churches, a playground, a cemetery, several restaurants, several personal service businesses, retail establishments, a pharmacy, a post office, and conservation areas with public access trails.

3. **Restore and enhance the environment**. This site was a 21E site that needed remedial abatement. The Town of Acton took the land for back taxes and later discovered the soil was contaminated by gasoline. The Town has now cleaned up the site at its own expense, and it has been approved by the DEP for residential redevelopment. The building on the site is boarded up and the land area is overgrown and unsightly. Housing development will be a welcome improvement on the site, enhance the neighborhood, and restore tax revenues to the Town.

4. **Expand Housing Opportunities**. The development of this site will provide needed units for low and moderate income families.

5. **Provide Transportation Choice**. The site is within walking distance to businesses in West Acton Village. It is approximately 1.3 miles from the South Acton Commuter rail station and there is a sidewalk to the station for almost the entire route. The site is also located within 2 miles of Rt. 2 and 5 miles from Rt. 495 for easy access to the highways.

9. Does the Acton Master Plan support the use of town land for affordable housing?

Yes, in 1990 and again in 1998, the Acton Master Plan supports these Strategies for Promoting Affordable Housing that would be met with this proposal:

1. Strategy H2: Seek opportunities to acquire buildable town-owned properties that might be suitable for donations towards the development of affordable housing
2. Strategy H4: Direct the focus of affordable housing initiatives to provide housing for the elderly, young families, and low and moderate income residents in our community.

10. What housing needs are identified in the new Community Development Plan entitled "To Live in Acton"?

Acton's specific housing needs were identified in 2004 through a needs assessment process and are listed in order of priority:

1. Affordable rental units for very-low and low-income families;

2. Affordable rental units designed for low-, moderate- and middle-income senior citizens and persons with disabilities;
3. Affordable homeownership units for moderate-income families;
4. Affordable homeownership units in a range of residential use types and sizes for moderate and middle-income seniors; and
5. Homeownership units at below-market prices, affordable to middle-income homebuyers.

11. Which needs will be met with this proposal?

Two of the units (2-BR duplex and 3-BR bungalow) will be sold to low-moderate income households with incomes no greater than 80% of the Area Median Income. The third unit (3-BR duplex) will be sold to the Acton Housing Authority for use as a rental unit for low income families.

12. How does ACHC propose to accomplish this proposed development and what are the steps in the process?

1. July 18 Meet with Board of Selectmen to seek vote that would give ACHC site control of the property, not ownership.
2. ACHC will apply to DHCD LIP program to get site eligibility from a subsidizing agency, which is necessary for the next step
3. ACHC will apply to ZBA for a Comprehensive Permit. A comp. permit is needed because the units are not attached, triggering the need for a zoning variance.
4. Once the Comprehensive Permit is approved, ACHC will prepare an RFP, with help of consultant. The project will be put out to bid using the required state bid regulations. Included in the RFP will be the Comp. Permit, DHCD LIP approval, Wastewater Disposal plan, and preliminary architectural design.
5. ACHC will select the developer who is most likely able to complete the development according to the conceptual design and whose proposal best meets the RFP.
6. Ownership will transfer to the developer who will then develop the property according to the comprehensive permit.

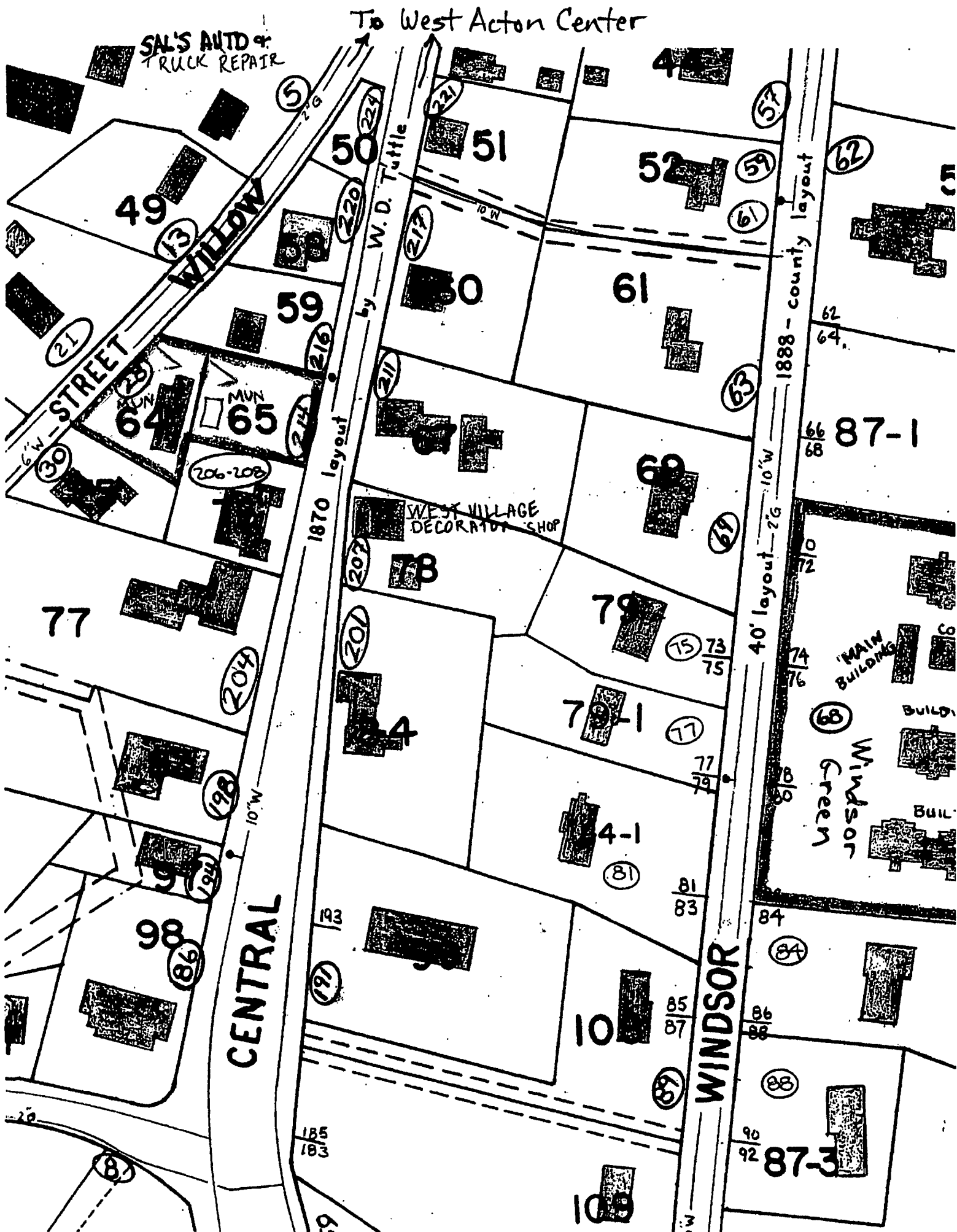
13. Who has authority to dispose of the land?

Town Meeting votes annually to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell and convey properties that the Town has obtained via tax foreclosure.

7/5/05

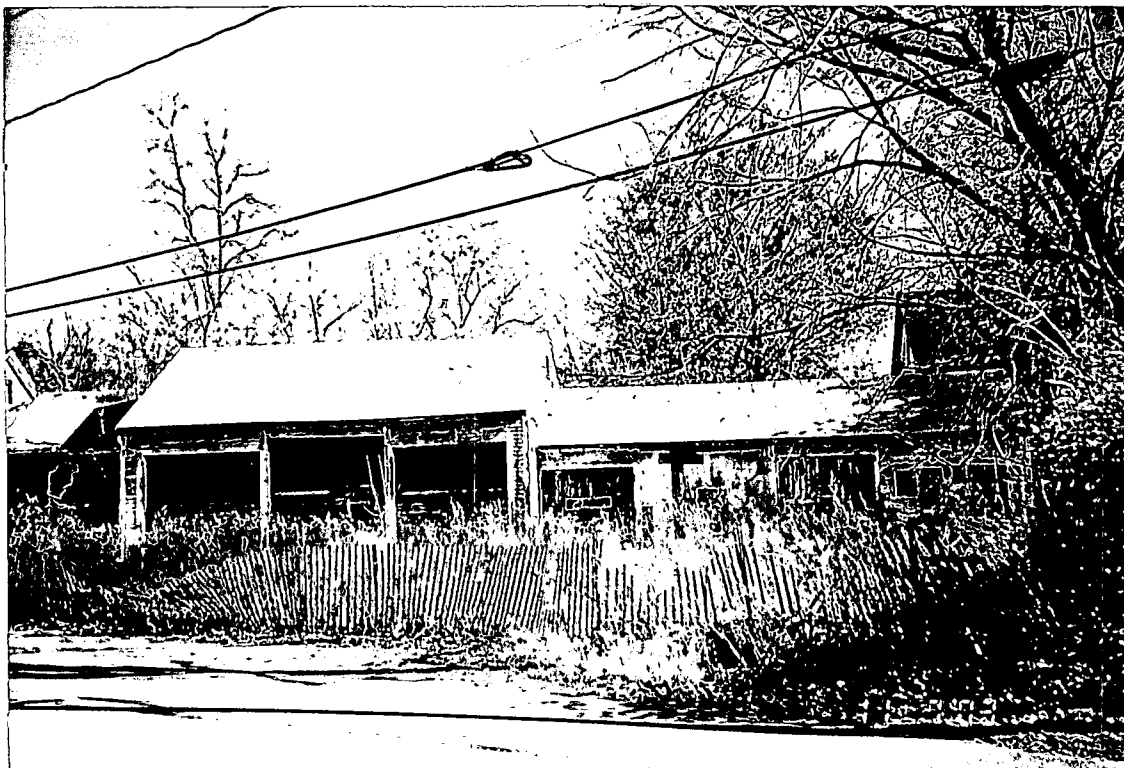
WEST ACTON VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD



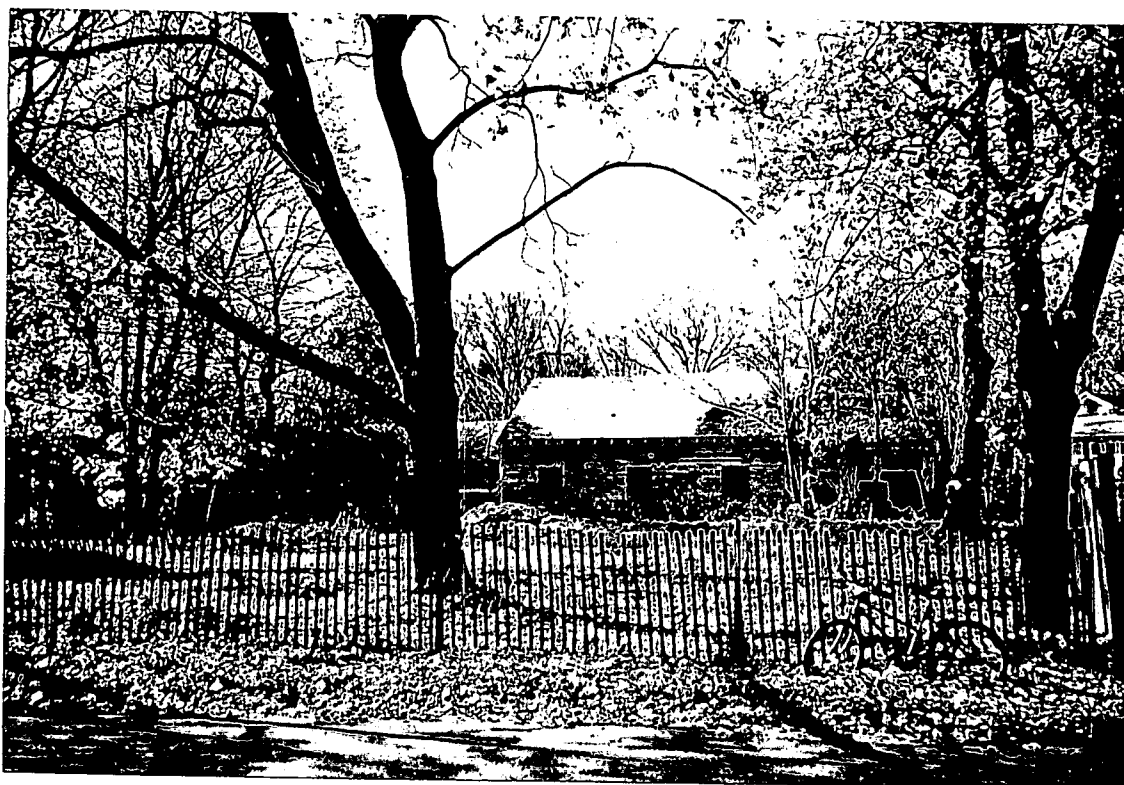


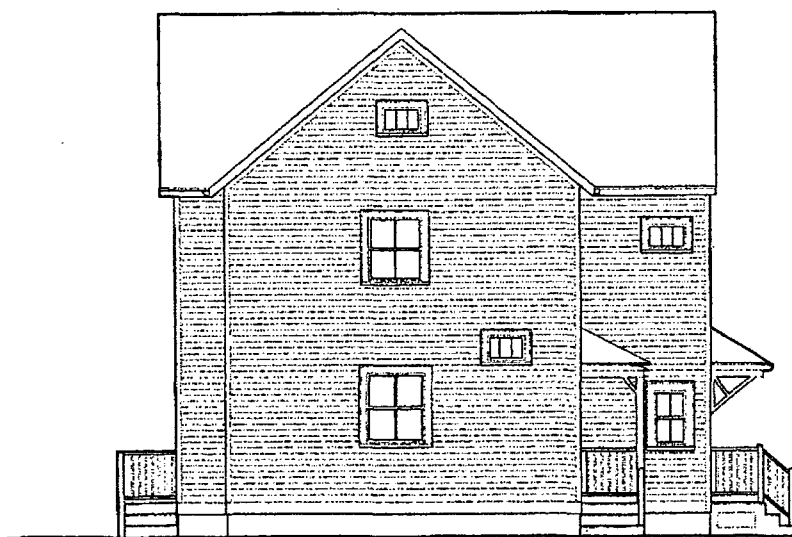
Pictures

Subject Property 28 Willow Street



Subject Property 214 Central Street





South Side Elevation Central 2 & 3 BDRM Units

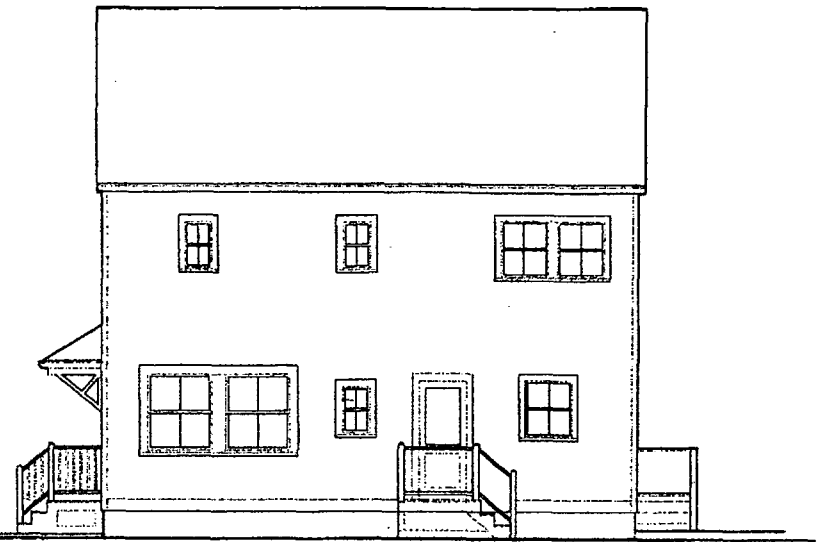


Central Elevation 2 & 3 bedroom Units

Central Street

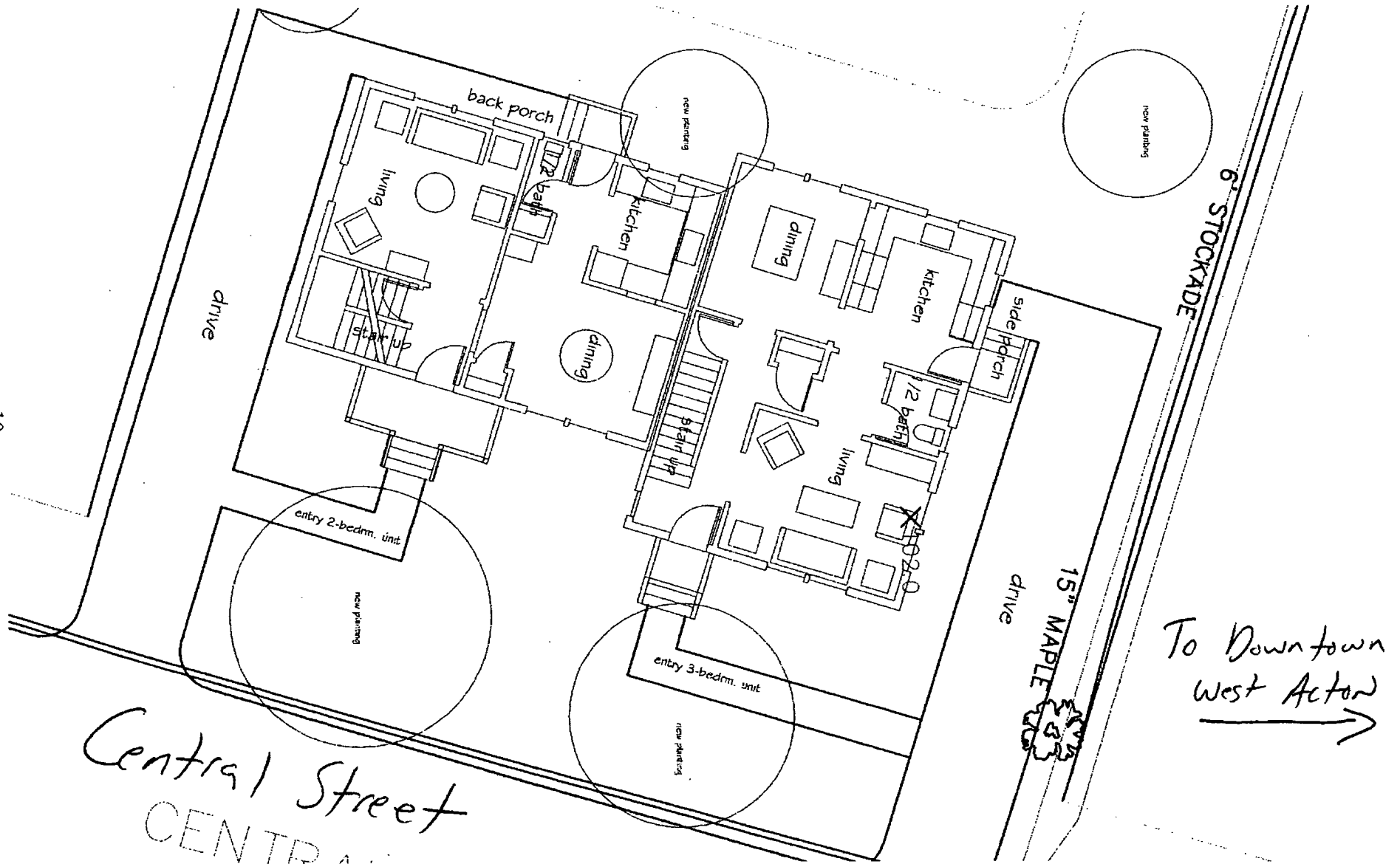


West Side Elevation Central 2 & 3 BDRM Units



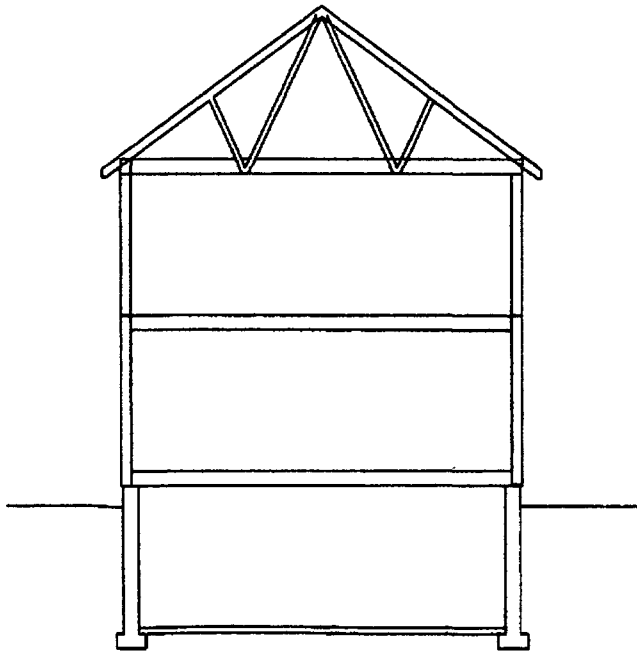
North Side Elevation Central 2 & 3 BDRM Units

Central Street

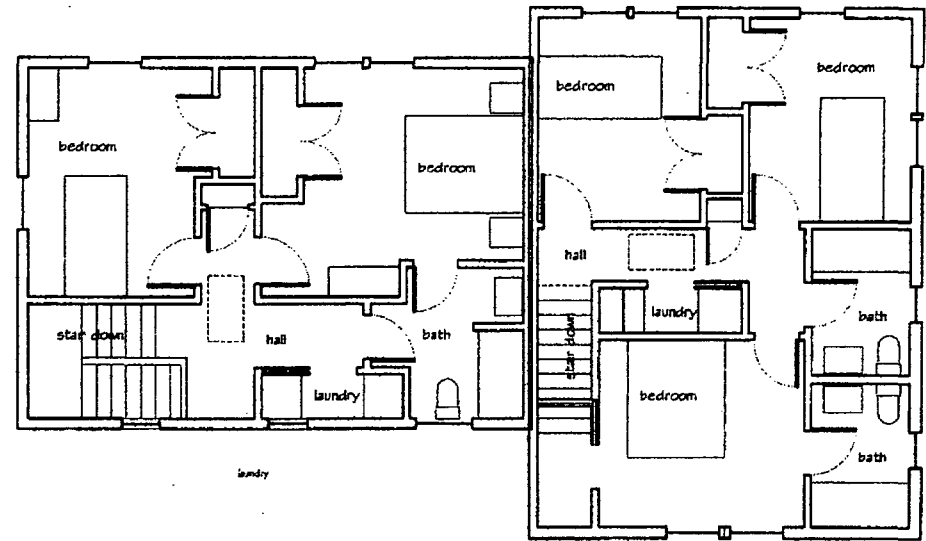


West Side Elevation Central 2 & 3 BDRM Units

North Side Elevation Central 2 & 3 BDRM Units



Gable Section Central 2 & 3 Bedroom Units

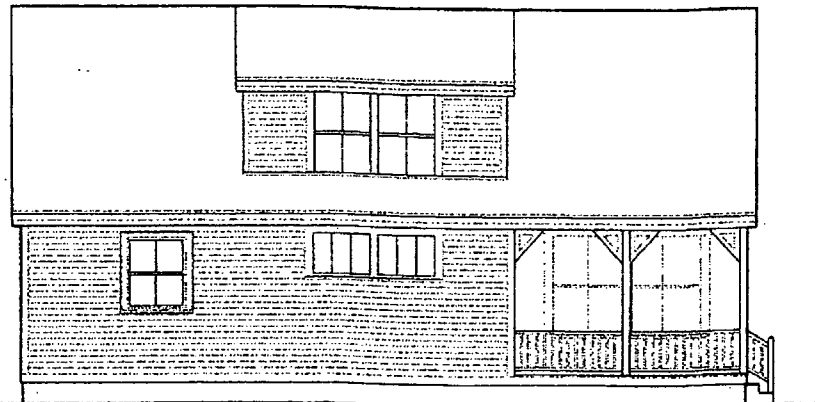


Second Floor Central 2 & 3 Bedroom Units Plan

Central Street

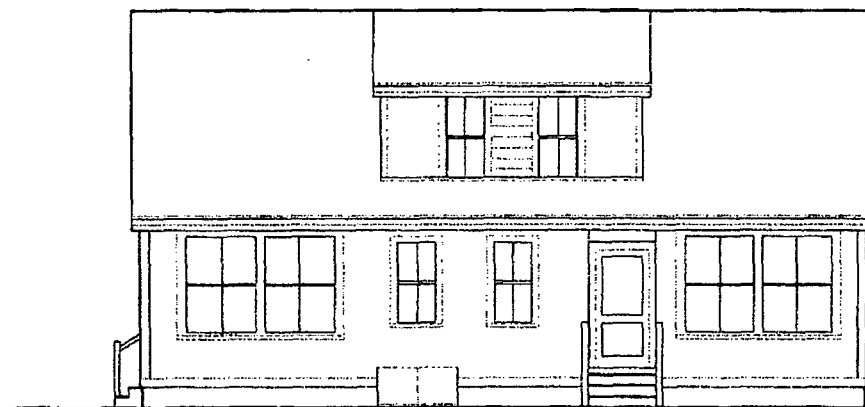


Street Elevation Willow Bungalow



North Side Elevation Willow Bungalow

Willow Street

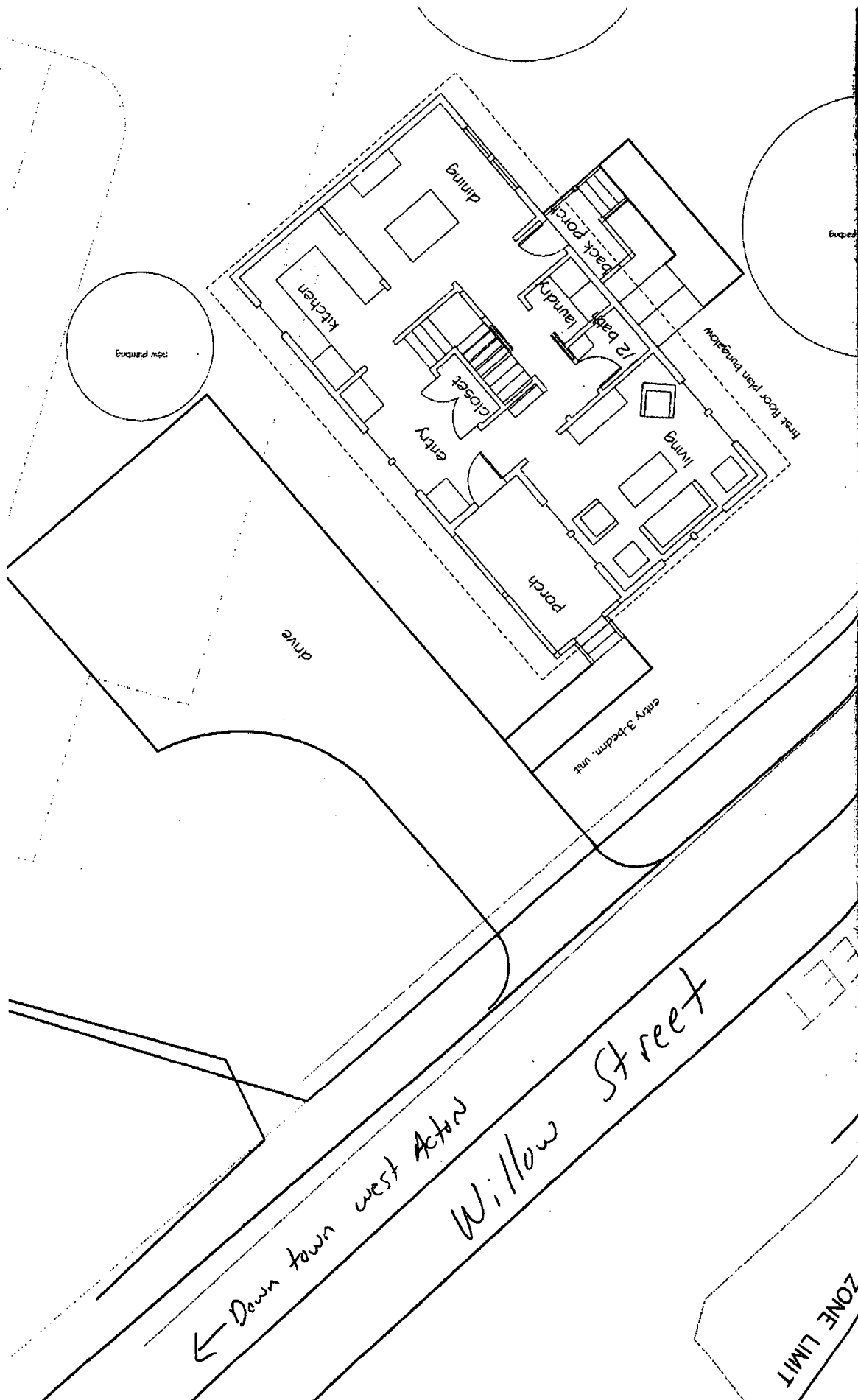


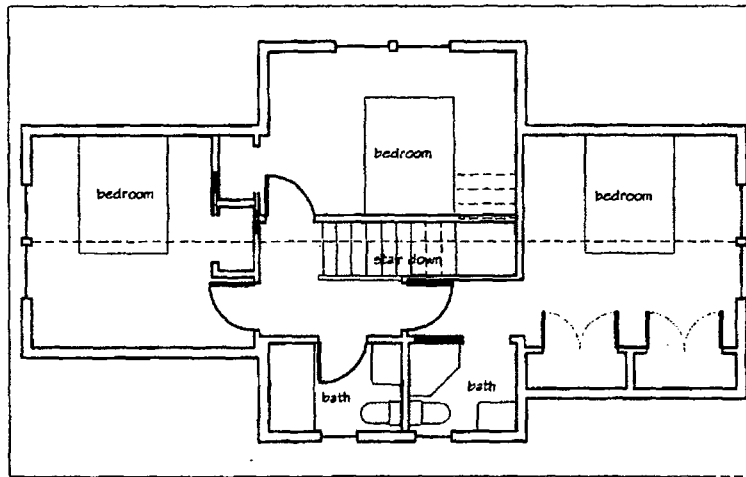
South Side Elevation Willow Bungalow



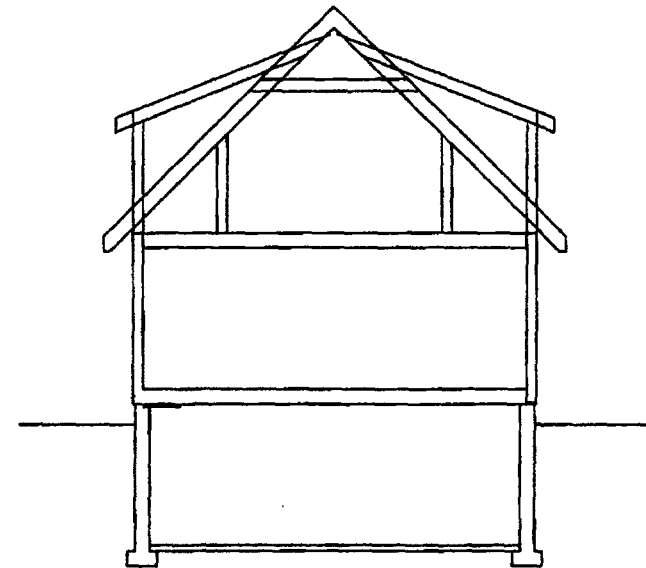
East Side Elevation Willow Bungalow

Willow Street





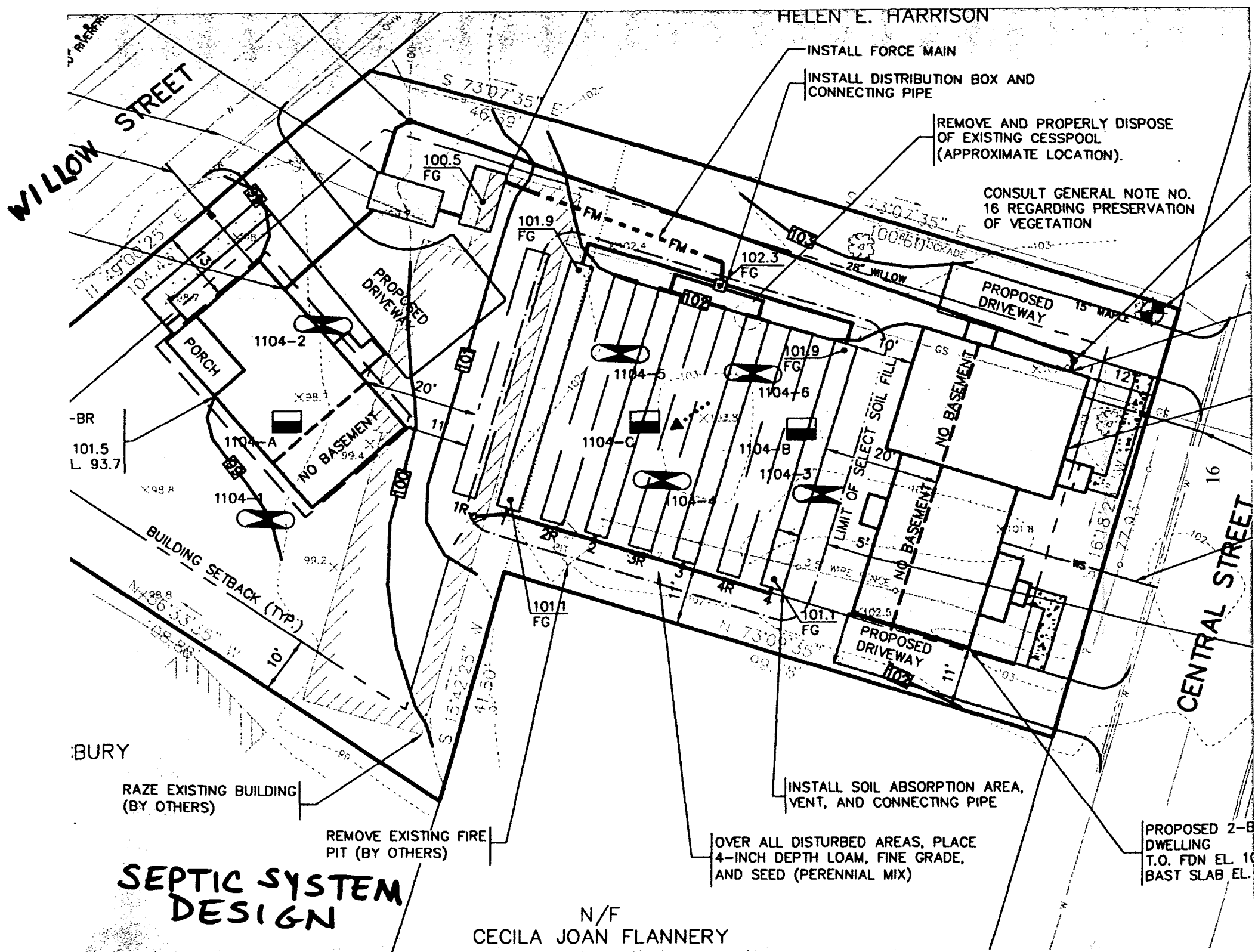
Second Floor Willow Bungalow Plan



North-South Section Bungalow

Willow Street

HELEN E. HARRISON



SEPTIC SYSTEM
DESIGN

N/F
CECILA JOAN FLANNERY

Willow / Central
 Acton Mass
 6/25/05

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------|--|--------------------|--|--|
| Development Revenue | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Number of Units | | 3 | | 3 | | |
| Number of Bedrooms | | 8 | | 8 | | |
| Number of Market Rate Units | | 0 | | 0 | | |
| Number of Affordable Units | | 3 | | 3 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Acton Housing Authority Purchase | | | | \$350,000 | | |
| 3 bedroom Affordable Sale | | | | \$190,000 | | |
| 2 bedroom Affordable Sale | | | | \$160,000 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Revenue from Sales | | | | \$700,000 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Total Development Cost | | | | \$1,198,275 | | |
| Gap Financing / Funding Needed | | | | \$498,275 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Partial Town Funds | | | | | | |
| CPA Funds | | | | \$248,275 | | |
| Non Town Funds | | | | | | |
| AHA Condo \$350,000 | | | | | | |
| State/ HUD Funds | | | | \$250,000 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Total Development Revenue | | | | \$1,198,275 | | |
| Total Development Cost | | | | \$1,198,275 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Net of Revenue and Cost | | | | \$0 | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|------------------|-----|--|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Site Acquisition | | \$175,000 | | \$175,000 | | |
| clean up/back taxes/market value | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Site Work | | | | | | |
| Site Work | | \$50,000 | | \$50,000 | | |
| Demolition | | \$20,000 | | \$20,000 | | |
| Landscaping | | \$25,000 | | \$25,000 | | |
| Sidewalk betterment | | \$5,000 | | \$5,000 | | |
| Water hook up | | \$8,250 | | \$8,250 | | |
| Driveways and walkways | | \$15,000 | | \$15,000 | | |
| Septic System | | \$85,000 | | \$85,000 | | |
| Sub Total | | \$208,250 | | \$208,250 | | |
| Site Work Cost Contingency | 10% | \$20,825 | 10% | \$20,825 | 10% | |
| Total Site Work Costs | | \$229,075 | | \$229,075 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Residential Construction Costs | | \$500,000 | | | | |
| Concrete | | 4000sq ft * \$125 | | \$36,000 | | |
| Gutters | | | | \$3,500 | | |
| Carpentry | | | | \$65,000 | | |
| Roofing | | | | \$24,000 | | |
| Insulation | | | | \$15,000 | | |
| Doors and Windows | | | | \$35,000 | | |
| Interior Finishes | | | | \$30,000 | | |
| Cabinets and Appliances | | | | \$33,000 | | |
| Electrical | | | | \$18,000 | | |
| Siding and Trim | | | | \$55,000 | | |
| Painting | | | | \$28,000 | | |
| Plaster | | | | \$35,000 | | |
| Plumbing and HVAC | | | | \$55,500 | | |
| Temp Power and Toilets | | | | \$6,000 | | |
| Cleaning and Dumpsters | | | | \$8,000 | | |
| Flooring | | | | \$25,000 | | |
| Misc. | | | | \$28,000 | | |
| Sub Total | | \$500,000 | | \$500,000 | | |
| Construction Cost Contingency | 10% | \$50,000 | 10% | \$50,000 | 10% | |
| Total Construction Costs | | \$550,000 | | \$550,000 | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|--|
| Site Soft Costs Estimate | | | | | | |
| Permits/Approvals | | \$4,000 | | \$4,000 | | |
| Architectural Plans | | \$25,000 | | \$25,000 | | |
| Engineering Survey | | \$5,000 | | \$5,000 | | |
| Legal | | \$15,000 | | \$15,000 | | |
| Insurance | | \$15,000 | | \$15,000 | | |
| Development Fee/Consultant | | \$65,000 | | \$65,000 | | |
| Construction Supervisor | | \$40,000 | | \$40,000 | | |
| Property Tax | | | | | | |
| Construction Interest | | | | | | |
| Accounting | | \$10,000 | | \$10,000 | | |
| Marketing/Lottery Costs | | \$8,000 | | \$8,000 | | |
| Overhead Profit | | | | | | |
| Consultants | | \$30,000 | | \$30,000 | | |
| Conditions Imposed by Town Boards | | \$5,000 | | \$5,000 | | |
| Sub Total | | \$222,000 | | \$222,000 | | |
| Soft Cost Contingency | 10% | \$22,200 | 10% | \$22,200 | 10% | |
| Total Soft Cost | | \$244,200 | | \$244,200 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Total Development Revenue | | \$1,198,275 | | \$1,198,275 | | |
| Total Development Cost | | \$1,198,275 | | \$1,198,275 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Net of Revenue and Cost | | \$0 | | \$0 | | |

Affordable Housing in Acton Acton Community Housing Corporation

The Town Board charged with facilitating affordable housing is the Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC). This quasi-public body is a Selectmen appointed board, created by a Home Rule petition in 1996. Prior to this, ACHC was a private non-profit housing partnership group formed by the Selectmen in 1986. The Home Rule petition grants the ACHC broad powers not normally held by Town Boards. Original membership included individuals from the banking, real estate and development fields, lawyers, housing advocates, and interested citizens. Many of these same dedicated individuals became charter members of the 1996 Town board and remain members today.

ACHC has five full members and three associate members. Most of the current members are professionally involved in affordable housing development. The Town's charge to ACHC is to "provide affordable housing opportunities for working families with modest incomes."

The role of the ACHC is to act as the Town's initial contact with developers of proposed affordable residential housing projects, which may be site-specific or exploratory. The developer presents a proposed housing plan, indicating unit design and size, related facilities, site planning and affordability. The developer indicates any requests that will be made for a density bonus or other variances in return for the provision of affordable housing. Following ACHC review and discussion, specific requests may be made of the developer relative to the proposed housing, particularly as to the size, scale, adequacy, and appropriateness of the development, before the proposal is taken to the town staff and town boards. ACHC generally holds one or more public information sessions on each proposal.

Affordable Housing is defined in Massachusetts as *housing for households with incomes not exceeding 80% of the Area Median Income **AND** which restricts rents or home prices for a specific period of time*, generally 99 years in Acton. The price range of affordable homes is currently \$140,000-195,000. Deed riders restrict the future re-sales of these properties to other income eligible families. Housing is considered affordable if it does not consume more than 30% of gross household income. There may be some properties in Acton that are valued at these low prices but unless they are deed restricted for income eligible families, they can neither be counted toward the Town's 10% nor officially termed Affordable Housing.

The most effective tool for the creation of affordable units is the "Comprehensive Permit". This is the common term used to describe the process of permitting affordable development using MA General Laws Chapter 40B. This legislation was enacted in 1969 to encourage the development of housing for low and moderate-income individuals and families. Since 1970, more than 30,000 housing units across state have been developed under Chapter 40B. Under the statute, 40B establishes a comprehensive or "streamlined" permitting process enabling a local ZBA to approve a proposed housing development if at least 25% of the units are affordable to households whose gross annual household income

does not exceed 80% of area median income. The 2005 median household income for the Boston Metropolitan area that includes Acton is \$82,600. For a household of 4, 80% of the median household income is \$66,150.

Although a 40B project must adhere to the state Wetlands Protection Act, meet state building codes, and DEP Title V requirements, a comprehensive permit circumvents all other local zoning and approvals. A comprehensive permit may be used in a community where less than 10% of the housing units are affordable to households whose median income is 80% or less of area median. **Acton has 2.35% of its 7645 total housing units designated as affordable.** The MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is responsible for maintaining an inventory of affordable housing and certifying the number of affordable units in each city and town.

Under the comprehensive permit process, an eligible developer may request that the ZBA waive certain requirements under the community's zoning ordinance if the developer believes that the provisions make the development financially unfeasible. If the developer's application is denied, the ZBA's decision can be appealed to the state Housing Appeals Committee (HAC). The five-member HAC, which operates under DHCD, can override a local denial or conditional approval unless the project poses serious health and safety issues that cannot be mitigated. Historically, most cases that have been appealed to HAC have been decided or settled in favor of the developer especially in the communities under the mandated affordable housing count of 10%.

Acton Community Housing Corporation Members

Nancy Tavernier
Ryan Bettez
Betty McManus
Robert Whittlesey

Dan Buckley
Kevin McManus
Pam Shuttle
Bernice Baran

7/1/05

ACTON COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION

ACTON'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING MILESTONES

- 1990 Annual Town Meeting adopts Master Plan vision statements, including “Promote a wide range of economic diversity in housing including low and moderate income housing.”
- Fall Special Town Meeting adopts the Affordable Housing Overlay District.
 Sub-district A includes most sizeable vacant or underdeveloped parcels around Town: 25% density bonus for +/-10% affordable units. Preserves single-family neighborhood character, but allows some duplexes.
 Sub-district B comprises less acreage. Includes, most vacant and underdeveloped parcels near designated commercial growth centers – villages and Kelley’s Corner, and other parcels near established commercial areas. Allows up to 5 multi-family units per acre for +/-30% affordable units.
- 1993 (2)* Acorn Park PUD – 74 single-family units plus one commercial building. Planning Board negotiated two off-site affordable units using existing housing stock. Completed.
- 1994 (1)* New View PCRC - 24 units in single-, duplex-, and triplex buildings with one on-site affordable unit plus \$100,000 contribution to Town affordable housing fund, all under sub-district A zoning regulations. Completed.
- 1995 (6)* Bellows Farm PCRC, 1995 – 114 single-family units. Planning Board negotiated six off-site affordable units using existing housing stock. Completed.
- 1998 (4)* Westside Village **40B project** - Westside Drive off Sudbury Road. 16 single-family units, four affordable, on 5.25 acres. Completed. Base zoning was General Industrial, now Powder Mill. Affordable Housing Overlay Sub-District B applies. Within walking distance are Powder Mill Plaza (Stop&Shop, CVS, banks, restaurants) and other restaurants, and stores in Acton and Maynard.
- 1999 (4)* Harris Street Place Major Affordable Housing project (local sub-district B zoning with variance for 25% affordable units) - Jennifer Path & Samantha Way off Harris Street. 16 single-family units, four affordable, on 3.3 acres. Completed Base zoning is Residence 10/8. Affordable Housing Overlay Sub-District B applies. Adjacent to Great Road commercial area – convenience store, liquor store, clothing store, restaurant, etc.
- 1999 Annual Town Meeting confirms affordable housing goals in 1998 Master Plan Update.
- 2001 (1)* Dunham Lane OSD – 10 single-family homes plus one on-site affordable unit rehabbing existing home. Lottery held March 2005.
- 2002 (3)* Crossroads Condominium **40B project** - At 248 Main Street. 12 townhouse units, three affordable, on 2.23 acres. Completed in 2004. Base zoning is Residence 2. Affordable Housing Overlay Sub-District B applies to the northern half of the property. Abutting and within walking distance to Kelley’s Corner commercial district – K-Mart, Roche Brothers supermarket, CVS, T.J.Maxx, restaurants, hardware, liquor store, medical offices, etc.

- 2002 (2)* Robbins Mill PCRC – 90 single-family homes. The Planning Board negotiated a \$400,000 donation to the affordable housing fund. Approved. Construction underway in 2005. Town will receive funds after 10th occupancy permit is issued.
- 2002 Colonial Acres IV PCRC – 23 single-family homes. The Planning Board negotiated a \$300,000 contribution for affordable housing to the Acton Housing Authority. Approved. Construction underway.
- 2003 (3)* Inn at Robbins Brook – Selectmen negotiated 3 rental units at the Assisted Living facility for low income seniors. Local preference is given to 2 of the 3 units.
- 2003 Affordable Housing Plan with State funds. State approved the project . \$30K from the Executive Order 418 funding of Community Development Plans. By State requirements, the project completed 6/30/04.
- 2003-2004 (3)*
Franklin Place Ch. **40B project** located at 520 Main St. just outside Acton Center. Originally proposed at 32 units. Denied by ZBA Nov. 2003. Negotiated a smaller project of 12 units. Approval by ZBA. Occupancy estimated September 2005.

Upcoming:

- 2004 Towne School building conversion to 18 affordable rental units. Time line estimated. Abutting and within walking distance of Kelley's Corner commercial district. Delayed due to procurement process question at state level. Expected to proceed in 2005.
- 2004-5 Fort Pond Brook Place Ch. **40B project** located at 68 River St. 8 units in 4, 2 unit (2)* townhouses with 2 affordable units. ZBA approved Dec. 21, 2004. Occupancy estimated for October 2005.
- 2004-5 The Woodlands at Laurel Hill Ch. **40B rental project** located at 80-82 Nagog Park. (96)* Proposed to be 296 rental units, 1 and 2 bedrooms, located in Acton. An additional 84 2-BR condo units that may be converted to 55+ housing. ZBA hearing began 11/4/04, still in hearing phase.
- 2005 (3)* Blanchard Place Ch. **40B project** for 139 Prospect St. Proposed to be 12 units of 2 and 3 BR condo units, with 3 affordable units. Project will be submitted to DHCD by August 2005.

* Number of affordable units in project

7/1/05

Acton Community Housing Corporation

Nancy Tavernier, Chairman

Ryan Bettez, Vice Chairman

Acton Town Hall

472 Main Street

Acton, Massachusetts, 01720

Telephone (978) 263-9611 (Nancy)

(617) 828-4197 (Ryan)

28 WILLOW STREET/214 CENTRAL STREET, WEST ACTON VILLAGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Acton Community Housing Corporation – Who are we?

The Town Board responsible for developing affordable housing strategies and implementing affordable housing programs in the Town of Acton. This quasi-public body is a Selectmen-appointed board, created by a Legislative Home Rule petition in 1996. Prior to this, ACHC was a private non-profit housing partnership group formed by the Selectmen in 1986.

ACHC has five full members and three associate members. Most of the current members are professionally involved in affordable housing development. The Town's charge to ACHC is to "provide affordable housing opportunities for working families with incomes at less than 80% of the Area Median Income." Currently 80% AMI for a family of four is \$66,150.

2. Where is the Willow/Central St. town-owned property?

The subject property consists of two adjoining parcels of land in a residential neighborhood in West Acton. The parcels have frontage on two streets, at 28 Willow St. and 214 Central St. The current zoning is Village Residential (VR), which would allow by special permit from the Planning Board up to 4 attached multifamily units on 15,000 square feet or more of land. The 28 Willow Street parcel is 8,091 square feet and contains an approximate 2,000 square foot office and garage building. The 214 Central Street parcel is 7,708 square feet. The two parcels combined are 15,799 square feet.

3. How did the Town come to acquire these parcels and at what cost?

These two parcels of land were taken by the Town of Acton for unpaid back taxes in the mid-90's. It was most recently used as a septic system installation and repair company, until approximately 1995. The Town of Acton has spent approximately \$70,000 for significant environmental remediation work through the 21E process to clean up a petroleum contamination problem. The site has been cleaned up and approved by DEP and the Town for residential re-use.

4. What makes this an attractive site for redevelopment?

This is an ideal site for a small multi-family development. The lot is located within close walking distance to the West Acton Village Center. Infill housing would be consistent with the Town's Master Plan and the Planning Board's emphasis on concentrating development within and near the village cores. There are other high density properties nearby, a duplex abuts the parcel on one side and another is across the street. A thoughtfully designed multi-unit project would blend in quite well. From the ACHC's perspective, the proposed development would get a piece of town-owned property back on the tax rolls, eliminate an eyesore and a safety hazard, and create much needed affordable housing.

5. What is the proposed design for this site?

The ACHC proposes to build a duplex farmhouse style building on the Central Street side of the parcel and a single family bungalow style building on the Willow Street side. The duplex would contain a 3-BR unit and a 2-BR unit, the bungalow would be a 3-BR unit. All three units would be sold or rented to low-moderate income households. The wastewater disposal system has been designed to accommodate a maximum of 8 bedrooms. (See specific design materials included in information packet)

6. How will the construction costs be funded?

ACHC, with the assistance of Massachusetts Housing Partnership, has put together a Sources and Uses Plan that demonstrates the financial feasibility of the proposal. Proceeds from the sale of the units, CPA funds, gift funds, and grants will be part of the development revenue mix.

7. What makes this proposal attractive to the State housing agencies?

The ACHC received a state grant of \$25,000 from DHCD and MassHousing as part of the Priority Development Fund program. The grant has been used to do preliminary site planning and architectural design. The proposed development has caught the eye of several agencies due to its location in a village area and its Smart Growth implications.

8. What makes this proposal Smart Growth?

The proposed development of multi-family housing on this site is consistent with the following Commonwealth principles of sustainable development (Smart Growth):

1. **Redevelop First.** This site was originally a residential unit that was converted to a garage and office use where cars and trucks were repaired. Its most recent use was by a septic disposal company using the building as an office and the parking area for septic disposal trucks. The proposed reuse of the property will enhance the neighborhood by cleaning up the long vacant site and eyesore while

providing housing consistent with the existing neighborhood without creating sprawl.

2. **Concentrate Development.** The West Acton Village area is a dense area with many large vintage homes, multi-family dwellings, and a diverse assortment of small retail and service businesses. This parcel is located in the Village area and within a one mile radius is a small public library, an Elderly Housing complex, two elementary schools, two churches, a playground, a cemetery, several restaurants, several personal service businesses, retail establishments, a pharmacy, a post office, and conservation areas with public access trails.

3. **Restore and enhance the environment.** This site was a 21E site that needed remedial abatement. The Town of Acton took the land for back taxes and later discovered the soil was contaminated by gasoline. The Town has now cleaned up the site at its own expense, and it has been approved by the DEP for residential redevelopment. The building on the site is boarded up and the land area is overgrown and unsightly. Housing development will be a welcome improvement on the site, enhance the neighborhood, and restore tax revenues to the Town.

4. **Expand Housing Opportunities.** The development of this site will provide needed units for low and moderate income families.

5. **Provide Transportation Choice.** The site is within walking distance to businesses in West Acton Village. It is approximately 1.3 miles from the South Acton Commuter rail station and there is a sidewalk to the station for almost the entire route. The site is also located within 2 miles of Rt. 2 and 5 miles from Rt. 495 for easy access to the highways.

9. Does the Acton Master Plan support the use of town land for affordable housing?

Yes, in 1990 and again in 1998, the Acton Master Plan supports these Strategies for Promoting Affordable Housing that would be met with this proposal:

1. Strategy H2: Seek opportunities to acquire buildable town-owned properties that might be suitable for donations towards the development of affordable housing
2. Strategy H4: Direct the focus of affordable housing initiatives to provide housing for the elderly, young families, and low and moderate income residents in our community.

10. What housing needs are identified in the new Community Development Plan entitled "To Live in Acton"?

Acton's specific housing needs were identified in 2004 through a needs assessment process and are listed in order of priority:

1. Affordable rental units for very-low and low-income families;

2. Affordable rental units designed for low-, moderate- and middle-income senior citizens and persons with disabilities;
3. Affordable homeownership units for moderate-income families;
4. Affordable homeownership units in a range of residential use types and sizes for moderate and middle-income seniors; and
5. Homeownership units at below-market prices, affordable to middle-income homebuyers.

11. Which needs will be met with this proposal?

The units will be sold to low-moderate income households with incomes no greater than 80% of the Area Median Income. An option for one of the units is to sell it to the Acton Housing Authority for use as a rental unit for low income families. Other options include selling a unit at a deed-restricted below-market price or as a market unit to help finance the project.

12. How does ACHC propose to accomplish this proposed development and what are the steps in the process?

1. Board of Selectmen voted to give ACHC site control of the property.
2. ACHC has applied to DHCD LIP program to get site eligibility from a subsidizing agency, which is necessary for the next step
3. ACHC will apply to ZBA for a Comprehensive Permit. A comp. permit is needed because the units are not attached, triggering the need for a zoning variance.
4. Once the Comprehensive Permit is approved, ACHC will prepare an RFP, with help of consultant. The project will be put out to bid using the required state bid regulations. Included in the RFP will be the Comp. Permit, DHCD LIP approval, Wastewater Disposal plan, and preliminary architectural design.
5. ACHC will select the developer who is most likely able to complete the development according to the conceptual design and whose proposal best meets the RFP.
6. Town Meeting will vote to authorize the Selectmen to convey the Property to ACHC on certain terms and conditions for purposes of re-conveyance, subject to applicable law, to a developer that will develop affordable housing on the Property. The ACHC will reimburse the town ~\$203,000 for all the costs incurred on the land through clean-up, legal, and back taxes.
7. Ownership will transfer to the developer who will then develop the property according to the comprehensive permit.

Affordable Housing Development Proposal
for 214 Central Street/28 Willow Street

Acton Community Housing
Corporation (ACHC)
Town Meeting Article 29
April 2006

I am Nancy Tavernier, the chairman of the Acton Community Housing Corporation.

ACHC is the Selectmen-appointed board responsible for facilitating affordable housing opportunities in Acton

Article 29 is the final in a series of votes for the Willow/Central project that we have brought to Town meeting over the past 3 years.

We are pleased to share with you our proposal for the use of this town-owned parcel

Diversity in Housing

- ◆ ACHC facilitates affordable housing opportunities – ownership and rental
- ◆ Current affordable housing stock
 - Single family homes – scattered sites
 - Multi-family 40B developments
 - Apartments
 - Acton Housing Authority units
 - Proposed Habitat unit
 - Condo Buy-down program
 - Willow/Central – ACHC first hands-on project

2

ACHC believes it is important to have a diversity of affordable housing opportunities in the Town for low and moderate income households. These are the housing types we have now:

READ THEM (we do not own these properties)

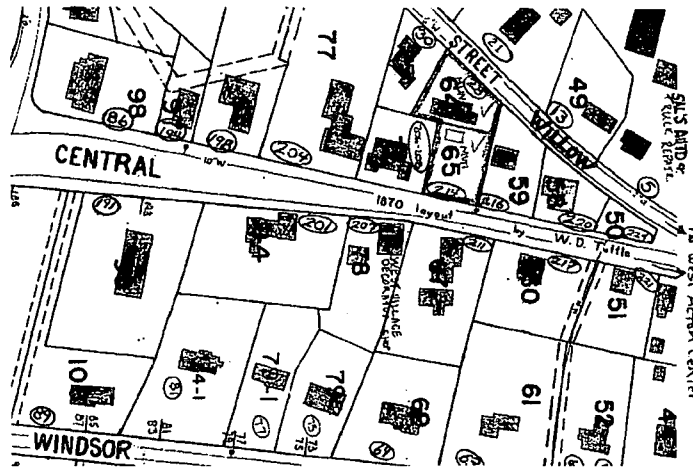
Then there is the Willow/Central project, our first hands-on development

ACHC's OBJECTIVES for this project when we began in 2003 were:

- 1. To reach out to the neighborhood and to the community as a whole to build something that everyone could be proud of.**
- 2. To build a small scale affordable housing development that would meet with neighborhood approval. and**
- 3. To create a model for affordable housing development that could be used in other similar in-fill locations in town and in other suburban communities.**

This is the proposal we have created:

West Acton Site Location



3

The Town owned parcel is located between Central and Willow St. , south of the fork in the road for Willow and Central in the West Acton Village area

Willow/Central Site History

- ◆Septage hauler company
- ◆Tax taking in 1998
- ◆\$70K cleanup petroleum contamination
- ◆ACHC pursued affordable housing option since 2003
- ◆State Law requires reimbursement for taxes and clean-up

4

This parcel has had a checkered history

First a garage, then a septage hauler company with a property owner who did not pay his taxes

Land taken for back taxes by Town in 1998

Land discovered to be contaminated. Cleaned up at taxpayer expense

Because this is a tax taking state law MANDATES the reimbursement of back taxes and penalties

This parcel also required the clean-up costs incurred by the town to be reimbursed

The total payment to the town for this property will be \$203,000.

CPA and housing gift funds will be used for this payment

Stress difference with River St/Habitat land

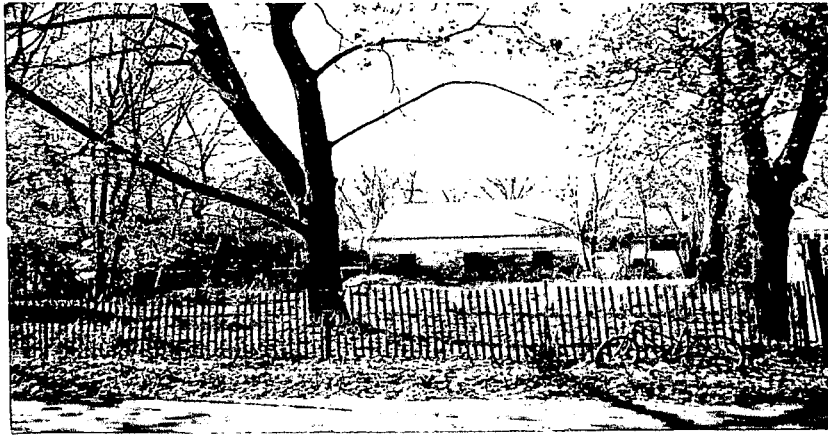
28 Willow Street



5

This is the property and the old garage as it currently is. Quite an eyesore
as exists today

214 Central Street



6

This is the parcel and garage from the Central St. side

ACHC Development Phase I

- ◆ State planning grant 2004-2006 \$25,000
- ◆ Meetings with neighbors/town boards
- ◆ Phase I feasibility study began 10/04
 - Architectural and septic system designs
 - Design consistent with neighborhood streetscape

7

We were awarded a State Grant for the planning of this project in 2004
During Planning Phase 1

We met with the neighborhood numerous times getting important design preferences from them

We met with several town boards for their input and support

Based on that input we created a design for 3 units

This design was consistent with the overall design of properties in the adjacent neighborhood

Development Proposal

- 3 affordable deed-restricted units in two structures
- Duplex on Central Street
 - ◇ 2-BR unit
 - ◇ 3-BR unit (Acton Housing Authority option)
- Bungalow on Willow St.
 - ◇ 3-BR unit

8

We settled on 3 deed-restricted units in 2 structures

duplex on Central St. 2BR and 3BR (AHA option)

bungalow on Willow St. 3 BR

Houses on Central Street



9

These are the existing properties on Central st. that the architect used to influence the design of the duplex to keep it in a proper scale, based on the streetscape of the neighborhood. ~~Larger houses are on this side of the parcel~~

Central st has larger houses

Central Street Duplex

old



9

architect

This is the design ~~he~~ created, a village farmhouse design, with the 1500 square foot 3BR unit on the right and 1200 square foot 2BR unit on the left

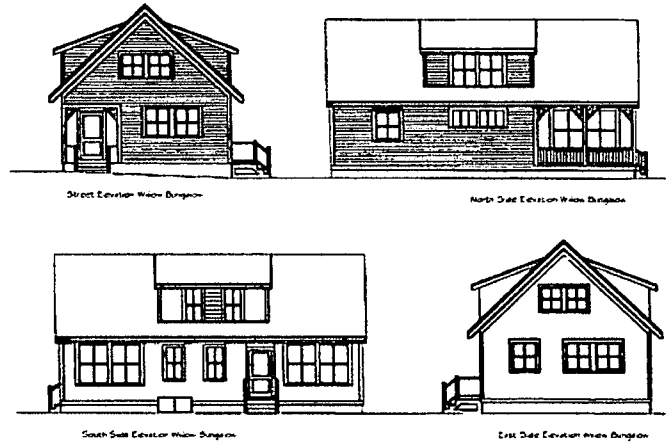
Houses on Willow Street



11

The houses on Willow St. are smaller scale so it called for a more modest sized building.

Willow Street Bungalow



12

This is the design for the bungalow on Willow St., a 2 story 3BR 1320 square foot house

Phase 2 – Action Plan

- ◆ Town meeting vote to convey to ACHC
- ◆ Application for Comp Permit to ZBA
- ◆ Prepare RFP, put out to bid
- ◆ Select developer
- ◆ Land disposition agreement w/ BOS
- ◆ Transfer ownership to developer

13

- These are the final steps to the beginning of construction
- Town Meeting vote to authorize BOS to convey the property to ACHC
- ACHC will apply to the ZBA for a comp permit
- A request for proposals will be put out seeking a developer to build to this design
- The developer will be selected and will negotiate a land disposition agreement with the Town
- ACHC will convey the parcel to the developer

Benefits to Community

- ◆ Affordable Housing
- ◆ Smart Growth
- ◆ Neighborhood Improvement
- ◆ Community-Driven Process
- ◆ Repay taxpayers for clean-up
- ◆ Restore lost tax revenue
- ◆ Put land back on tax rolls

14

To meet the objective of finding a public purpose for this town owned land, we believe this project provides many benefits to the community

We set out to create a project that would be beneficial to the community and we believe we have done that

- Affordable housing without market units
- Smart Growth principles: village, walking to services, schools, churches, near commute rail, clean up contaminated site, in-fill and not sprawl
- Neighborhood improvement: clean up unsafe eyesore
- Community driven: neighbors and town boards
- Repay taxpayers for clean up
- Repay back taxes
- Put land on tax rolls going forward

THANK YOU!

- ◆ Willow/Central neighborhood
- ◆ Town boards
- ◆ Town departments
- ◆ Town Counsel
- ◆ DHCD and Mass Housing
- ◆ Affordable housing advocates

15

We have found that Affordable housing development is not easy for a Town to do. There have been many stumbling blocks along the way that discouraged us but every time that happened any number of these people helped pull us back up and push us along.

- Starting with the Willow/Central neighborhood, a special group of people. It was their idea to create small units that were all affordable

- The town boards especially the BOS, *+ my colleagues on ACTHC esp Ryan Betley*
- The town departments especially Engineering, Health, Planning and the Town Manager

- Town Counsel Steve Anderson who is as determined as we are to see this succeed

- DHCD and MassHousing who have called us the Poster Children of the Priority Development Fund program

- Affordable housing supporters through out the town

- We also want to Thank you for the previous votes of support and urge you to make the final one tonight.

Finally I would like to recognize a very special long time Acton family, who stepped forward to help this project go forward at a time when we truly thought it was down for the count. In mid Feb., the town engineering department discovered a property line discrepancy when they were doing the survey. To make along story short, the Willow/Central parcel was missing 725 square feet of land including 10 feet of frontage on Central St. The land had belonged to the abutters since 1912 and had been mis-recorded since 1920. Without this wedge of land, the ACHC design was not going to work.

The only hope was to seek an easement from the abutters. Don Johnson approached them and we held our breath while they considered it. They agreed to sell us the easement for one dollar! We have just signed the easement agreement with these abutters and that act of generosity will allow this project to go forward.

Thank you Bud and Joan Flannery, long time West Acton residents!

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Join our e-mail list:

ACHC description

ACHC began as private non-profit housing corporation in 1986 after Town Meeting voters approved and Housing Partnership designation. In 1996, the Legislature approved a Home Rule petition to change the status of ACHC from a private non-profit to a quasi-public body with 5-7 members appointed by the Selectmen. The HR petition gives ACHC powers that are not found in any other town board such as the ability to hold our own funds, purchase, sell and rent property, hire consultants and personnel, etc. It is these special powers that allowed ACHC to bring forth this proposal and gave them the standing and jurisdiction to apply for a comprehensive permit which was granted by the ZBA in December 2006.

History of site

The subject property consists of two adjoining parcels of land in a residential neighborhood in West Acton, combined they are 15,335 square feet with frontage on two streets. The Willow Street parcel contains a garage building, which will be demolished. These two parcels of land were taken by the Town for nonpayment of taxes in 1998. The site was used as a septic system installation and repair company, until approximately 1995. As part of the agreement with the Selectmen and, as required by State Law for tax taking parcels, the ACHC paid the Town \$202,548.32 for the land which reimburses the Town for all of the expenses incurred including back taxes, interest, penalties, legal costs and clean-up. ACHC used CPA and housing gift funds for this purchase.

Proposed development – facts

The ACHC has designed three (3) condominium units, in two separate dwellings on the parcel, a duplex farmhouse style building on the Central Street side of the parcel and a single family bungalow style building on the Willow Street side. The duplex will contain a 3-BR unit and a 2-BR unit, the bungalow will be a 3-BR unit. These units are small starter home designs with square footage ranging from 1200 to 1500. These small efficient units, will be made of materials that are more affordable in the long run, such as vinyl siding and energy efficient appliances.

The bungalow and the 2-BR duplex unit will be sold to first time homebuyers. The 3-BR duplex unit is proposed to be purchased by the Acton Housing Authority for their family low income rental program. The Housing Authority has to procure this unit through an RFP. They will be using CPA and other housing gift funds for this purchase. In this scenario, all three units will count toward the town's 10%.

History of final design

The ACHC was first given the go-ahead by the Selectmen in Fall 2003 to do a feasibility study of development of this site for affordable housing. The design was developed with input from the neighbors, appointed and elected officials, state housing officials, and other interested parties. The ACHC began the preliminary design process by gathering together the neighbors to seek their input on design, density and scale. After meeting with the neighborhood, it was agreed that

a large scale structure would be completely out of character with the village area and the unique historic streetscape on both Willow and Central Streets. The neighbors have been very supportive through out the preliminary design and approval phases.

ACHC was awarded a grant of \$25,000 from DHCD and MassHousing to fund preliminary engineering and design services in preparation for gaining approval for the development from relevant state and local bodies.

Once the septic capacity was determined, ACHC selected an Architect who was particularly sensitive to the preservation of the existing character in an historic neighborhood. He created the schematic design for a duplex (2 and 3 BR units) on Central St. side; and a bungalow (3 BR) on Willow St. side.

Site Plan Description

The placement of the units on the lot was carefully thought out. While the frontage on the Willow St. side is greater and would therefore make sense to put the larger building on it, it would have resulted in a building out of scale for that neighborhood. Putting the duplex on the Central St. Side matched the scale of the nearby houses much better. The Town Engineering and Health departments proposed Exclusive Use Areas for each unit and they were able to give each unit its own septic system.

ACHC had to acquire an easement from the abuttor at 208 Central to accomodate the driveway for the 2-BR duplex unit due to a mis-calculation of the land area. This discrepancy in land area was discovered half way through the design by the Engineering Dept. It was an error in the deed that was traced back to the 1940's. The Town actually owned less land than it thought. The abuttors Ed and Joan Flannery have very generously agreed to convey an easement to ACHC for utilities and access.

Impacts on Neighborhood

This is an ideal site for a small multi-family development. The lot is located within close walking distance to the West Acton Village Center. Infill housing is consistent with the Town's Master Plan and the Planning Board's emphasis on concentrating development within and near the village cores. It also meets many Smart Growth criteria including redevelopment of a previously contaminated site.

Consistency with Acton Comprehensive Plan

This proposal is also consistent with the goals in the Selectmen and Planning Board's Comprehensive Permit policy. It is located in one of the Town's preferred development centers, it is a small scale project, and the design has community support.

The ACHC received approval 4 times from Town Meeting voters for the use of CPA funds for project planning, design, and land acquisition. Town meeting voters also authorized the Board of Selectmen to convey the parcels to the ACHC for this development.

Development process

It was never planned for either the ACHC or the Town to be the developer of this project. We could have chosen to be the developer but in doing so, it becomes a public construction project with all its inherent cost and process impacts such as taking the lowest bids, sub-file bidding, prevailing wages and the need to hire a clerk of the works. For a small residential project, this is simply not practical.

Once the Comprehensive Permit was granted, the ACHC put out an RFP to find a developer who is willing to meet the terms of the Permit. The beauty of this process is the binding of the developer to construct only 3 units at the size and design specified and to sell them as affordable units. The more ACHC locked up in the Permit, the more they controlled the project without actually having to control it as you would in a public construction project.

The ACHC selected Mark C. O'Hagan of MCO & Associates, located in Harvard, MA, as the developer. Mark has an extensive background in creating and distributing affordable housing in both Acton and throughout Eastern Massachusetts. ACHC will convey the Title to the developer through a Land Disposition Agreement between the ACHC and the developer, approved by the Board of Selectmen on July 16, 2007.

Financing

The ACHC has used private housing gift funds and CPA funds to subsidize the development of the project. This includes the Land Acquisition cost of \$203,000 that was paid to the Town to reimburse the taxpayers for the cost of cleaning up the parcel and the lost tax revenue.

The RFP and the Land Disposition Agreement between ACHC and the Developer focused on the project finances. Mark O'Hagan has committed to developing Willow Central without any additional funding from ACHC. Mark is a very dedicated affordable housing advocate who is determined to help ACHC succeed in its first even hands-on development.

In addition to the funds already expended, ACHC was approached by Stephen Steinberg, trustee of the Steinberg-Lalli Foundation. Steve was so impressed with the Willow-Central proposal that he has pledged a significant grant from the Foundation that will be used to offset the selling prices of the units, making them even more affordable to first time homebuyers and the Acton Housing Authority.

What developer will receive for his \$1 purchase of the land

The value of this project to the developer is huge, just in red-tape avoidance alone. This is what the developer will be handed by the ACHC:

1. The Title to the land, free and clear
2. The approved Comprehensive Permit
3. The schematic design
4. Detailed construction drawings
5. Detailed engineering designs
6. An approved sewage disposal plan and BOH approval

7. Neighborhood support
8. Town board support
9. Guaranteed buyers
10. Assistance from the ACHC in conducting a lottery

Conclusion

The conclusion of this project is very exciting for the ACHC, they have been working on this project since 2003. There have been many hurdles put in our path, developing affordable housing is never easy. ACHC have been propelled along the way by the people in this town who really care about such issues as neighborhoods, design, and affordable housing.

Nancy Tavernier, Chair
ACHC
July 16, 2007